

ILLUSTRATED TALES TO BEWITCH & BEDEVIL YOU

588856

VAMPI  
#18

AUG. 1972

# VAMPIRELLA

A WARREN MAGAZINE PDC 75¢

The Cold Touch of  
The Conjuress  
awaits Vampirella --  
when she discovers  
**"DRACULA STILL LIVES"**





# VAMPI'S FEARY TALES



MY! WHAT AN ASSORTMENT OF HANDSOME MALE READERS. SO STRONG WILLED AND POWERFULL LOOKING. SURELY NO LITTLE OL' FEMALE COULD TWIST YOU AROUND HER LITTLE FINGER, RIGHT? BEFORE YOU REPLY, ABSORB A BRIEF DISSERTATION ON...

## Nymphs

A **NYPH** IS ANY TYPE OF MAGICAL MAIDEN WITH THE ABILITY TO ATTRACT OR LURE MEN. THIS CLASSIFICATION MAY ALSO INCLUDE WITCHES, WHO BY POTIONS AND SPELLS MAY ENTRANCE OR MASK THEIR TRUE FACE.

THE EARLIEST NYMPHS WERE THE **OREADS**... GODNESSES OF LOFTY MOUNTAINS... AND **DRYADS**, WHO LIVED IN DEEP FORESTS AND WERE SPIRITUALLY BOUND WITH TREES. UNWARY TRAVELLERS WERE OFTEN PREY TO EITHER THEIR PRANKS... OR AFFECTIONS.



SUPPOSEDLY PREVALENT DURING THE MIDDLE AGES WAS THE **SUCCUBUS**, A FEMALE DEMON WHO GAINED IMMORTALITY BY MAKING LOVE TO HUMAN MALES IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT.

VARIOUS LITERATURE AND LEGENDS GIVE US FEMALE VAMPIRES, GHOULS, MUMIES, ETC. THESE ARE LESS GENTLER, WITH MEN THEN NYMPHS. SO USE DISCRETION IN DATING STRANGE GIRLS. SOME MAY **REALLY** BE STRANGE!







NO. 18  
AUGUST  
1972

# VAMPIRELLA

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WRITERS THIS ISSUE: T. Casey Brennan, Don Glut, Esteban Maroto, Donald F. McGregor, Douglas Moench, Kevin Pagan

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### DRACULA STILL LIVES!

The continuing adventures of Vampirella as Conrad Van Helsing wills the alien girl through time and space to confront Dracula and the Conjurress.

### KALI

The tale of the Goddess Kali beset by the powers of the mad magician Caligor. He wished the maiden girl as a sacrifice to the great god Agni.

### SONG OF A SAD-EYED SORCERESS

One woman can be all things to a man, as David Winters learns to his everlasting regret. Come walk the spiral road of the soul and the serpent.

### WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN!

Like a thing unknown, the Cates' mansion sat proudly on the crest of death, its gabled roof sagging with the weight of a century-old murdered ghost.

### VAMPI'S FLAMES

Profile of writer Kevin Pagan, author of "Nymphs" on p.2, plus a treasure trove of fan page terror stories, including one titled "Eye of the Skull."

### THE DORIAN GRAY SYNDROME

Poor Hemut! He lived only for his art, that mysterious almost living painting people spoke of only in their darkest whispers, death's portrait.

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**A**s to that letter from L.F. in VAMPIRELLA #16, (Reader L.F. who gave only his initials wrote, "Congratulations on converting VAMPIRELLA from a horror comic to one filled with love stories and fairy tales."—ed.) I fail to see his point. What's his gripe anyway? I will defend VAMPIRELLA until a stake is driven through my heart.

**RICK SALLINGER**  
Liberty Bora, Pa.

L.F. doesn't know what he's talking about! Creepy and Eerie may be okay but VAMPIRELLA is tops by a long shot.

**BRUCE BARR**  
Lawrence, Kansas

The VAMPIRELLA series is getting as bad as "General Hospital." I don't really mind the fact that the stories are far beyond the realm of normal imagination. I more or less expect that from VAMPIRELLA. But for someone who presupposes to tell the true story of VAMPIRELLA, you sure are doing a rotten job. You won't print this.

**T. GAGLIANO**  
Warminster, Pa.

Sure wish you'd cut down on the love story atmosphere in VAMPIRELLA. We want more horror and gore! Best story in VAMPIRELLA #16 was "And Be a Bride of Chaos." The VAMPIRELLA series is really great!

**MARK THOMSON**  
Salt Lake City, Utah

I've been following your exploits for some time, VAMPI. You've fared well thus far but it's really too bad you lost your wings back in VAMPIRELLA #8. It must be difficult for a being, once so at home in the air, to be confined to earth.

**SCOTT STANSBURY**  
Palo Alto, Calif.

"Gorilla My Dreams" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was one of your best yet! When Eva turned into a gorilla, I just about had heart failure! I've just started reading VAMPIRELLA and I think it's really great! More stories like "Gorilla My Dreams," VAMPI.

**PAT FINN**  
Coffeen, Ill.

## "I'll burn my coffin and stand in the sunlight!"

Oh wow! I've been holding off writing to say that "Wolf Hunt" in VAMPIRELLA #14 was one of the best stories I've ever seen. Now I'm glad I waited. I refer, of course, to "And Be a Bride of Chaos" in VAMPIRELLA #16. This was, in my opinion, the best of the VAMPIRELLA saga and about the greatest story yet! The only thing that burned me in Bram Stoker's novel "Dracula" was that Stoker killed off the master. Thanks to you, he is no longer dead! If "Wolf Hunt" & "And Be a Bride of Chaos" don't make the VAMPIRELLA 1973 SPECIAL ISSUE, I'll burn my coffin and stand in the sunlight!

**RANDY HOLLIS**  
Martin, Tenn.



Better get ready to burn your coffin, Randy. Both stories are much too recent to see publication this year.

VAMPIRELLA is fantastic! I imagine you get a lot of letters which say that but I've heard that women never tire of flattery. At any rate, VAMPIRELLA #16 was excellent! I was pleased to see that the cover pictured a full page painting instead of the bordered ones on VAMPIRELLA #'s 14 & 15. The cover of VAMPIRELLA #16 was good, though not quite up to the level of the now classic VAMPIRELLA #12. It was great to see Maroto's work again in "Gorilla My Dreams." Pat Boyette is one of my very favorite artists and I really enjoyed his story, "Lover." Of course, not enough can be said of the VAMPIRELLA series. Jose Gonzalez outdoes himself with each new issue. VAMPIRELLA is destined to be the best horror fantasy book ever!

**M. GREGORY BRYAN**  
Seminole, Fla.

The stories "Lover" and "Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16 were superb!

**ERIK MIAZGA**  
Toronto, Canada

VAMPIRELLA #16 was a big disappointment. The only good story was "And be a Bride of Chaos." And the only reason that was any good was because of Gonzalez' artwork. When on earth is your lovely visage going to grace a poster? It has to be by Gonzalez though! I will continue to read VAMPI till Chaos needs false teeth.

**KYZER STEWART**  
Lakeland, Fla.

# inside 18

Uncle Creepy may have been the first with his own "Creepy Comments" feature (since retitled), but VAMPIRELLA's special, and at first, she didn't want anything that reeked of Creepy's handiwork. Now that she's come around, this INSIDE # section promises to be a regular letters page feature of VAMPIRELLA, wherein we'll fill you in on VAMPI news of

note and provide some background to the stories you're reading. News of note this go-around includes word of a fantastic 17" by 11" puzzle of the cover of VAMPIRELLA #2. Painted by Bill Hughes, the cover pictures VAMPI's cousin, Evilly the witch. See p.56 for details.

This issue of VAMPIRELLA is host to the second "Tomb of the Gods" story, "Kali" on p.26, the creation of "Dax, the Warrior" artist Esteban Maroto. His "Tomb of the Gods" series will appear in future issues of VAMPIRELLA while the adventures of Dax currently run in Eerie.

The Transylvanian Count, Dracula, returns to plague VAMPIRELLA this issue after one issue's hiatus. According to VAMPIRELLA writer, T. Casey Brennan, 1972 Warren Award winner for Best Story ("On The Wings of a Bird—Creepy #36), our Drakulonian sweetheart hasn't heard the last of Dracula either.

Profiled this issue, p.66, is veteran writer Kevin Pagan, author of the VAMPI's Feary Tales piece "Nymphs" on the inside front cover. Pagan's work also appears in the current Creepy. #46, with the chiller, "On The Ninth Day of Satan" about the coming of the Warlocks.

In case you've noticed some changes in VAMPIRELLA, Creepy and Eerie lately (like the start of this INSIDE # feature, for one), those responsible include J.R. Cochran, author of "The Disenfranchised" (Eerie #39), who was recently promoted to Editorial Director. Effective with Eerie #40, our new Art Director is Bill Dubay (call him "Dube"), who was profiled in VAMPIRELLA #15. Dube last illustrated "Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16 and next has a solo opus coming up in Creepy #47 titled, "Futurization Computation."

Surprise! Flo's Back and Warren's got her! Flo Steinberg, formerly of Marvel Comics, joins our Captain Company division as Marketing Director. Although she'll be spending 100% of her time on this, Mr. Warren also expects her to put an additional 25% on editorial work, where she'll be able to give us the benefit of her experience with that other publisher.



17" x 11" cover puzzle

## THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY Girl On the Red Asteroid

Don Glut, author of "Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16, gives his reasons for writing the piece: My memory on the writing of "Girl on the Red Asteroid" is rather vague. I recall being requested to write a science fiction story for a paperback anthology about three years ago. After trying to come up with something original, I

thought of a beautiful girl hatching from an egg on an alien world. After that, the story was a cinch to write. Unfortunately, neither the story nor anthology ever saw print due to a problem with the publishing company. So, a few years later, I made some changes in the story and adapted it to the format of VAMPIRELLA. Thus, it's finally printed.



## "Jose Gonzalez is a Michaelangelo when it comes to drawing Vampirella!"

You've really made it big, VAMPI. Keep that great combination of stories, artwork and covers going and you'll put the "bite" on everybody! Let's have more of you by Jose Gonzalez. He's a Michaelangelo when it comes to drawing you!

**BRUCE HOLROYD**  
Harrisburg, Pa.

This little epistle concerns two letters that saw print in VAMPIRELLA #17. One was from Mike Adkisson who said there was too much blood and gore in VAMPIRELLA. Hey man, this is a horror comic! If you dig peace and love, you should be reading love comics. The other letter, signed only "Paty," read like a witches brew. I think "Paty," whoever she is, has been watching TV's "Bewitched" too long. I may be a male chauvinist but at least I'm giving my full name.

**STEPHEN WISHER**  
Metamora, Ill.

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways: Jose Gonzalez, Esteban Maroto, Auraleon and Sanjulian to name a few. That is how I love you. Ever since our dear though eccentric Uncle Creepy lost the old greats like Reed Crandall (Lost? Uncle says there's a Reed Crandall piece coming up in Creepy #47—ed.), I thought the artwork would never be the same. Thanks to you, VAMPI, your new artists rival the talents of the greatest master of all, "Prince Valiant" artist Hal Foster. After all these years of reading VAMPIRELLA, Creepy and Eerie and having mixed emotions about the quality of each issue, the latest VAMPIRELLA, #16, brought together all of my favorites.

**BRUCE BALSEY**  
Rochester, N.Y.

**1 million  
READERS  
CAN'T BE WRONG!**

...THEY ALL ASKED FOR A

**VAMPIRELLA  
FAN CLUB**

SEE PAGE 61



Cause of much letter page comment this go-around is "Purification," a three-page humor piece written and illustrated by Nebot from VAMPIRELLA #16. Writes El Segundo, Calif. reader **DRAKE LETCHER**, "Who's this Nebot? You know who I'm talking about. The guy who drew that great story 'Purification.' His work is really fabulous! Give us more Nebot. Wow! Great! Fantastic! Super! Out of sight!"

"Girl on the Red Asteroid" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was terrific!

**ALFREDO ALFONSO JR.**  
Miami, Fla.

"And be a Bride of Chaos" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was by far the best story I've read in the last two years! And that Gonzalez art. It's really too much. The way he pictured Count Mordante's castle on p.9 of VAMPIRELLA #16 was so good that I was tempted to frame it. "Purification" was rather childish. What right does Uncle Creepy have panning your face and making cracks about your book? (See the letters pages of Creepy #45—ed.) Both Creepy and lead-belly Eerie are so far behind you, it's ridiculous.

**FRED TESKA**  
Yorktown Heights, N.Y.



How true. How true.

Bela Lugosi never did look like I pictured Dracula. Gonzalez' Dracula is much closer to the real thing. The best love horror story I've ever read is "Cilia" in VAMPIRELLA #16. It was excellent.

**C.D.**  
Stinnett, Texas

Sanjulian's cover of VAMPIRELLA #16 was beautiful. I'm distressed however by the continued use of the forces of Chaos in the VAMPIRELLA series. A pure diet of Chaos, however formidable a foe he is, tends to take the versatility out of the series.

**BRIAN IVERSON**  
Spokane, Wash.

"Cilia" in VAMPIRELLA #16 was truly unbelievable.

**JERRI ROWLAND**  
Wrightsville, Ga.

Enjoyed "Purification" in VAMPIRELLA #16. "Gorilla My Dreams" had quite a surprise ending. Didn't much care for "Girl on the Red Asteroid." Sanjulian's cover was magnificent! Have more covers with VAMPIRELLA as she's the star!

**PAUL GORDON**  
Miami, Fla.

Sanjulian's cover of VAMPIRELLA #16 was wild! "Purification" was a refreshing change of pace. Stories like that are just another reason why your magazine is so great. "Cilia" was billed as one of the most beautiful horror stories ever told and I have to agree with that.

**JOHN KIMBLE**  
Willingboro, N.J.

I started this letter twice before realizing that I can't really find the right words to express my appreciation of VAMPIRELLA. I consider myself a comics connoisseur of sorts (I own over 2,000 comics), and I must say that the best comic book around is VAMPIRELLA.

**ERIK FLESCH**  
Cleveland, Ohio

I loved that story about Dracula and VAMPI in VAMPIRELLA #16.

**BOB MORRIS**  
Plainfield, Ill.

"Horrific" is the only word that adequately describes VAMPIRELLA #16. "Cilia" truly was one of the greatest horror stories ever told. Cheers for Gonzalez' rendering of the castle of Count Mordante on p.9 of VAMPIRELLA #16. Unfortunately, the story "Purification" just did not compute. I hope you stick to straight horror and leave the humor strips where they belong. VAMPI's Flames and VAMPI's Feary Tales are monstrous. I really dig them. More horror!

**MIKE POWELL**  
Delmar, Delaware

VAMPIRELLA #16 was more like it! Like VAMPIRELLA #12 that is. I really sank my fangs in. "And be a Bride of Chaos" and "Gorilla My Dreams" were superb. The artwork in "Girl on the Red Asteroid" was great. "Cilia" was really good. We want a VAMPI poster.

**JOSEPH JIMENEZ**  
Los Angeles, Ca.

One thing I've noticed lately is the injection of social relevance into stories about werewolves and monsters. Forget it! Relevance ruins comics. Love the VAMPIRELLA series but isn't the idea of people laying in Dracula's coffin (see VAMPIRELLA #16, p.25—ed.) getting a little tired?

**EARL JONES**  
Ontario, Canada

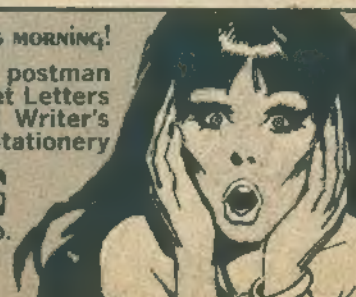
What a magazine! What fascinating and artistic stories! VAMPIRELLA is pure magical ecstasy!

**P. PANAGIS**  
Cape Province  
South Africa

**Gasp! Only 2,000 LETTERS this morning!**

Poor Vampi's maudlin! The postman only counted out 2,000 Scarlet Letters this morning. What's wrong? Writer's cramp? Address all Scarlet Stationery to:

**SCARLET LETTERS**  
c/o Warren Publishing Co.  
145 East 32nd Street  
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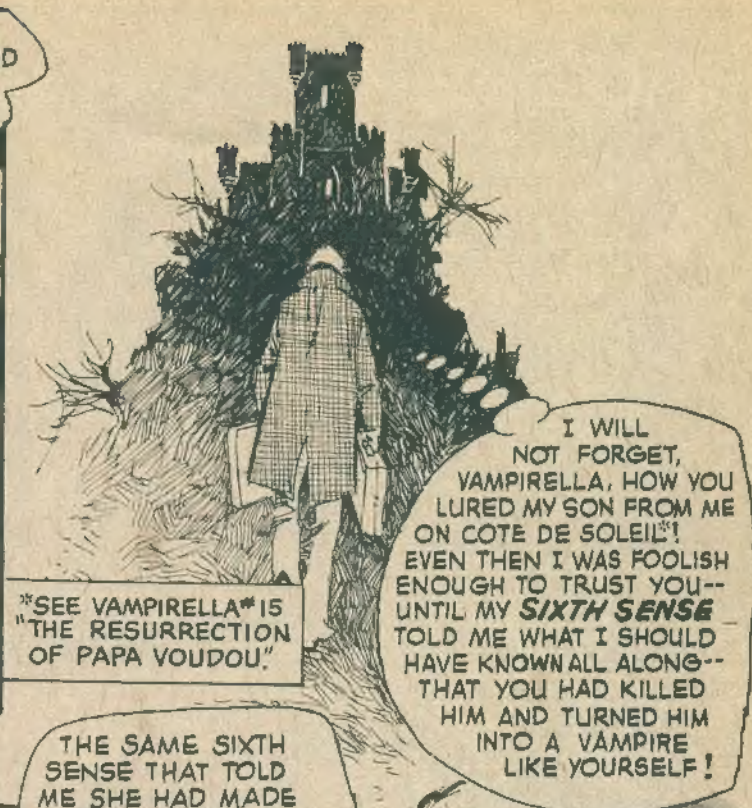
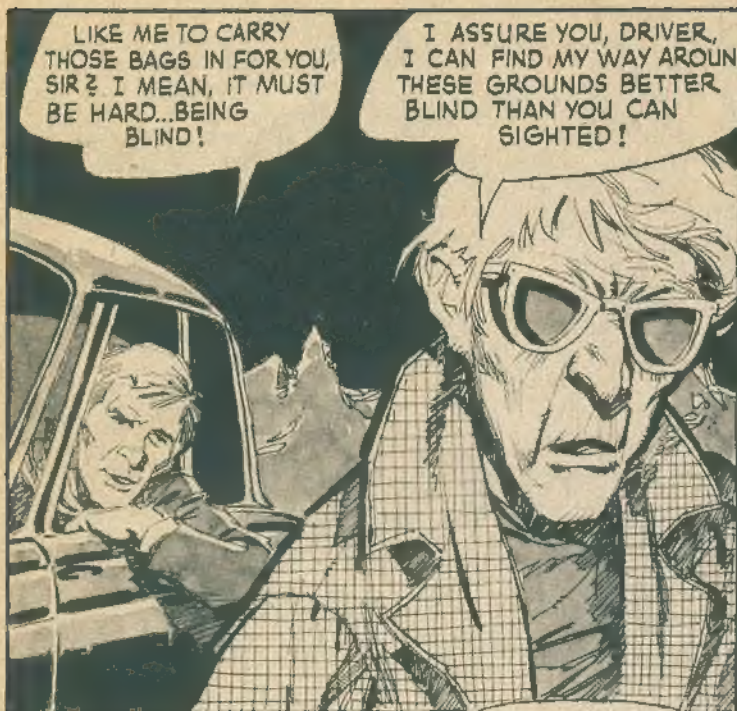




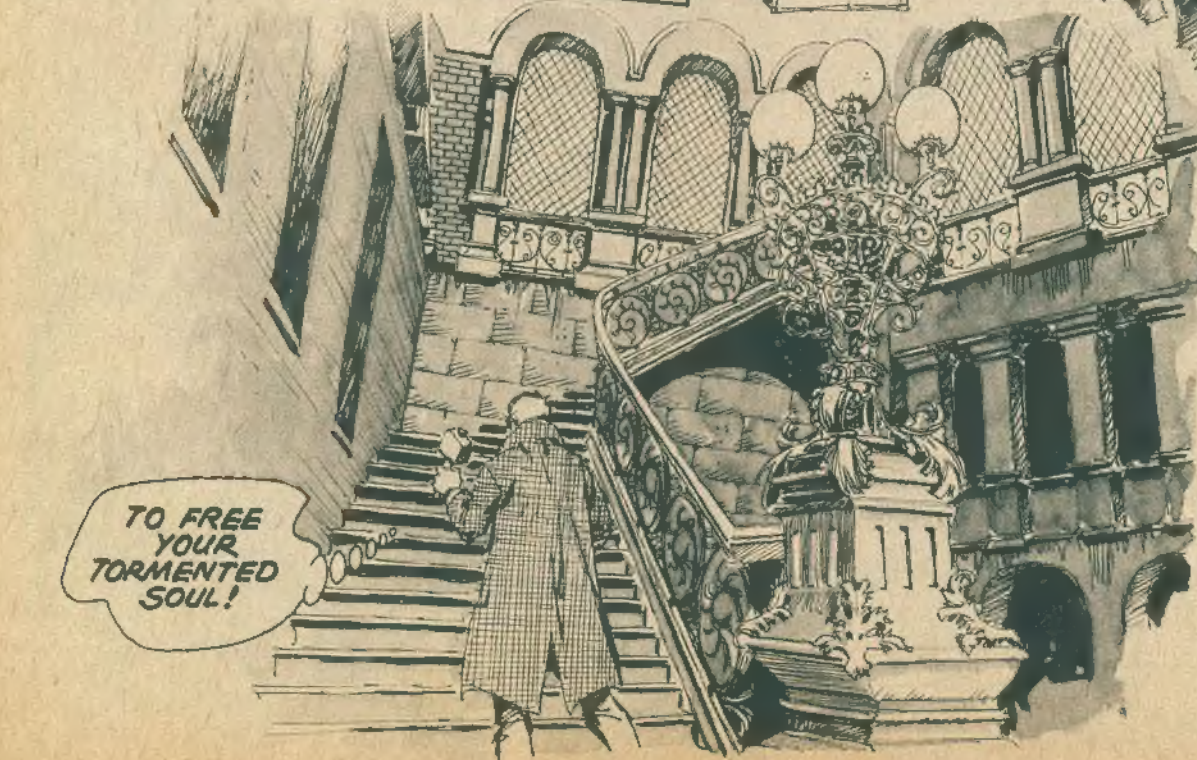
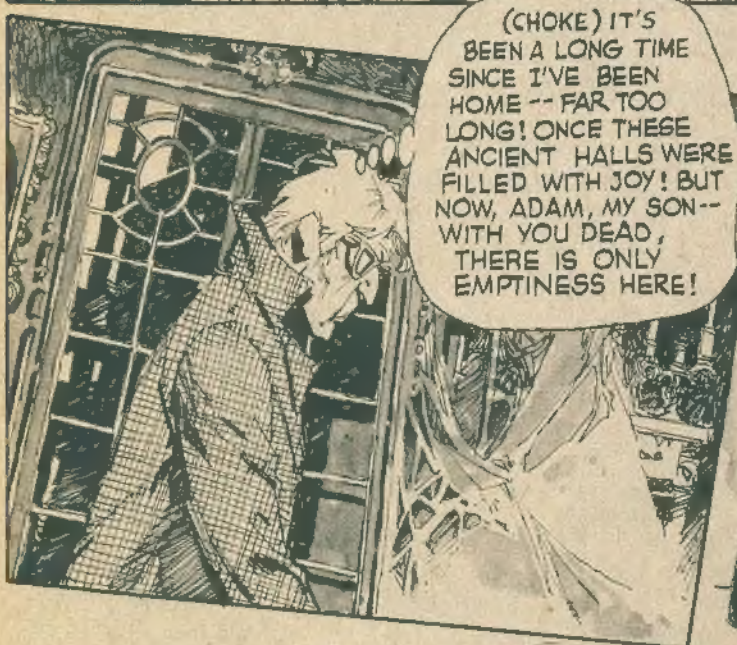
FOR CONRAD VAN HELSING, IT HAS BEEN A LONG JOURNEY—TAKING HIM FROM THE SUNNY BUT TURBULENT ISLAND REPUBLIC OF COTE DE SOLEIL, TO THE COLD AND DREARY GROUNDS OF THE VAN HELSING FAMILY MANSION. BUT THERE IS NO JOY IN THIS HOMECOMING, ONLY HATRED FOR THE GIRL CALLED... **VAMPIRELLA**.



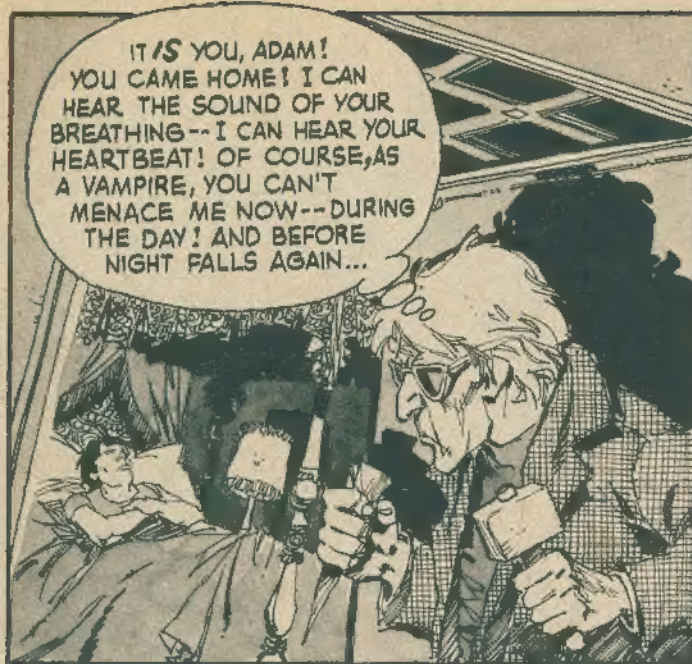




"SEE VAMPIRELLA" IS  
"THE RESURRECTION  
OF PAPA VOUDOU."







SUDDENLY...



AND ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD, HIGH IN THE TRANSYLVANIAN ALPS, WHERE NIGHT HAS ALREADY FALLEN, *ANOTHER* VAMPIRE STIRS...

HA! MY CASTLE IS RUINED BUT WHAT DOES IT MATTER? I AM ALIVE, AND HAVE LEARNED TO CONTROL MY *NEW* BODY AS WELL AS I DID MY *OLD*!



"WHEN A STAKE WAS DRIVEN THROUGH MY HEART AND MY CASTLE DESTROYED-- ALL BECAUSE OF *VAMPIRELLA* AND CONRAD VAN HELSING, ALL SEEMED LOST... \*"

"BUT SOMEHOW, LUCK WAS WITH ME! A WANDERING DERELICT WAS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO LIE IN MY COFFIN..."



\* SEE *VAMPIRELLA* #16-- "AND BE A BRIDE OF CHAOS"



"AND AS HE DID, *MY* SOUL ENTERED HIS BODY!"

"I SUMMONED VAMPIRE BATS TO ATTACK MY NEW BODY SO THE TRANSFORMATION WOULD BE COMPLETE..."


I'VE DONE IT!  
I, DRACULA, HAVE TAKEN  
POWER OVER THE BODY  
OF THIS PATHETIC  
DERELICT!

SKREEP  
SKREEP  
SKREEP


"IT IS DONE! MY POWERS - MY VERY APPEARANCE - THEY ARE ALL RETURNED TO ME! I AM AS I WAS -- THANKS TO THE MAGIC OF THE MAD GOD CHAOS WHOM I SERVE! NOW, *VAMPIRELLA*, BEWARE! FOR YOU WILL SOON LEARN THAT..."

DRACULA  
STILL  
LIVES!

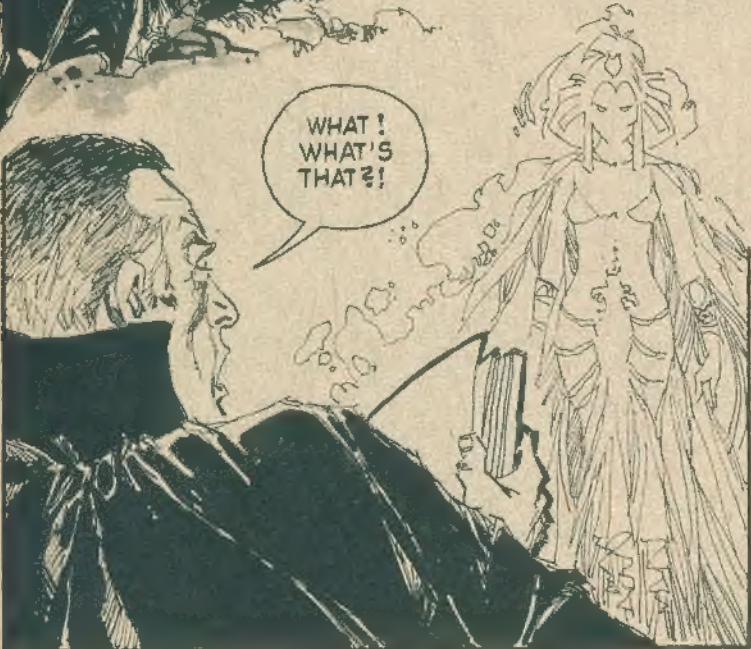





ALL THIS HAS COME TO PASS SINCE VAMPIRELLA AND I LAST LOCKED HORNS! BUT THE HOUR OF OUR NEXT CONFRONTATION- AND VAMPIRELLA'S **DOOM**- DRAWS NEAR!




ALL THAT REMAINS NOW IS TO SUMMON THE FORCES OF THE MAD GOD CHAOS TO HELP ME DESTROY HER! AND THAT I CAN DO NOW THROUGH THE CHIRIMSON CHRONICLES- THE MAGICAL BOOK WHICH SOMEHOW ESCAPED DESTRUCTION WHEN MY CASTLE FELL!




WHAT! WHAT'S THAT?!



NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE!



THE CONJURESS!

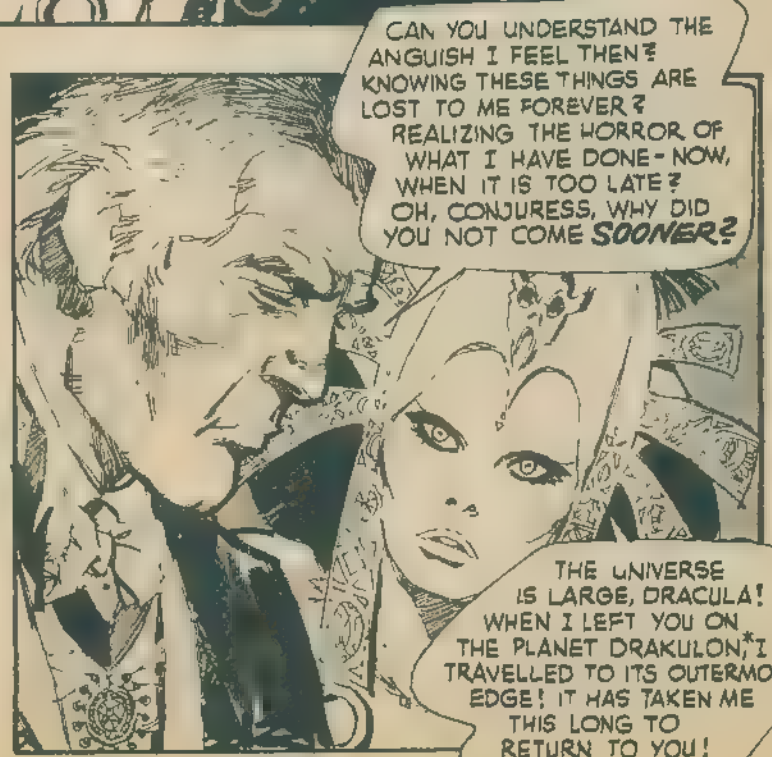
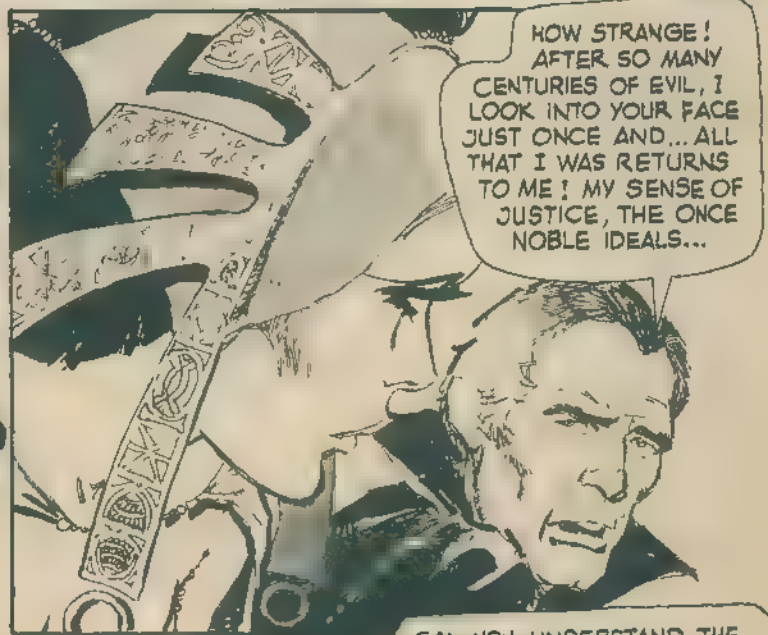
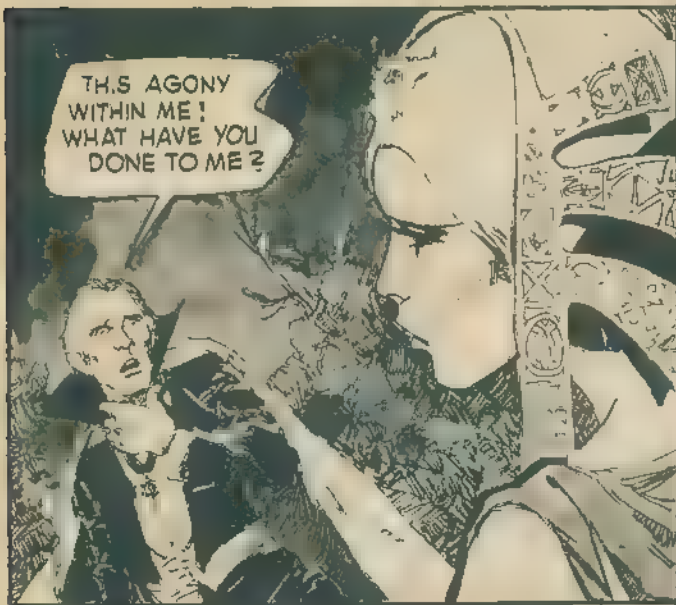


YES, DRACULA! I HAVE RETURNED FOR YOU- AFTER ALL THESE CENTURIES!



AND IN THAT ONE BRIEF MOMENT, A THING LONG  
FORGOTTEN IS REBORN IN THE SOUL OF **DRACULA**...

A THING CALLED GUILT, A REMEMBRANCE OF  
INNOCENCE AND INNOCENCE LOST, AND OF THINGS  
DONE WHICH CAN NEVER BE UNDONE...



THE UNIVERSE IS LARGE, DRACULA! WHEN I LEFT YOU ON THE PLANET DRAKULON, I TRAVELLED TO ITS OUTERMOST EDGE! IT HAS TAKEN ME THIS LONG TO RETURN TO YOU!

\*FOR MORE OF DRACULA AND HIS HOME PLANET, DRAKULON, SEE VAMPIRELLA #16...  
"AND BE A BRIDE OF CHAOS."



I HAVE RETURNED TO TAKE YOUR HAND AND LEAD YOU FROM WHAT YOU ARE, TO WHAT YOU *WERE!* IT WILL NOT BE AN EASY JOURNEY, DRACULA! IT WILL BE FRAUGHT WITH SUFFERING, FOR ONLY IN THAT WAY CAN YOU ATONE FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE! BUT THROUGH IT ALL, I WILL BE AT YOUR SIDE! ARE YOU WILLING?

THE CONJURESS GESTURES AND THE SCENE SHIFTS...

IF YOU DO THIS BUT FOR MY SAKE, DRACULA, YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN! STILL, YOUR HEART IS READY, WHATEVER THE REASON... BE BRAVE, FOR NOW... IT **DOES BEGIN!**

YES, I ACCEPT WHATEVER ORDEALS I MUST FACE, FOR YOUR SAKE, AND YOURS ALONE! FOR WITH YOU AT MY SIDE, HELL ITSELF WOULD BECOME PARADISE, AND ITS SULPHUROUS FLAMES LAPPING AT MY FLESH WOULD BE AS THE SUNSHINE ON A SUMMER'S MORNING! I AM READY! LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN!

BEHOLD, DRACULA! ...THE PATH OF ATONEMENT!

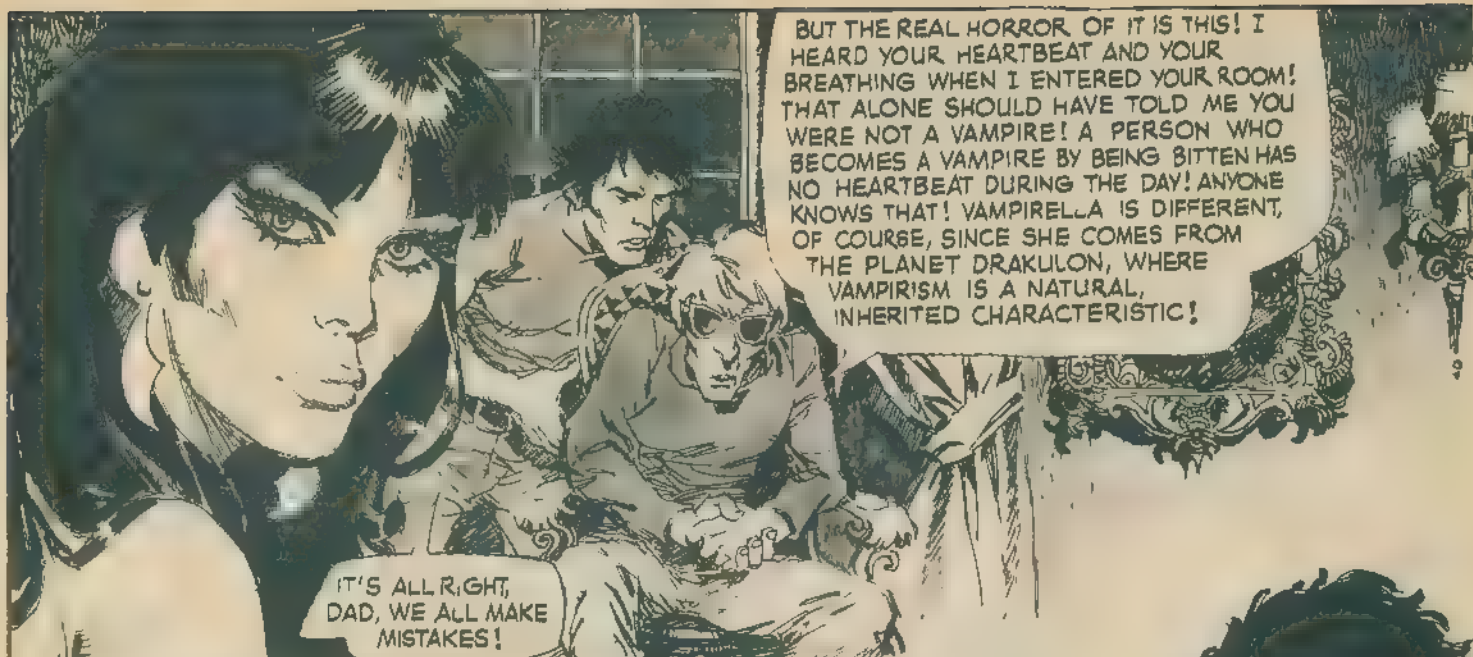
OF COURSE I WAS SLEEPING DURING THE DAY! I CAME HERE ONLY A FEW HOURS AGO, AFTER BATTLING CHAOS WITH VAMPI IN THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES! \* LUCKY FOR ME, SHE HEARD YOU COME IN!

HOW CAN I EVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR THIS, ADAM? I WAS SO SURE SHE HAD BITTEN YOU AND MADE YOU A VAMPIRE! MY SIXTH SENSE TOLD ME THAT WHILE I WAS STILL ON COTE DE SOLEIL! I-I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT!

MEANWHILE, AT THE VAN HELSING FAMILY MANSION, CONRAD VAN HELSING HAS BEEN SUBDUED, AND BEGINS TO UNDERSTAND..

\* SEE VAMPIRELLA # 17: "BEWARE, DREAMERS"





BUT THE REAL HORROR OF IT IS THIS! I HEARD YOUR HEARTBEAT AND YOUR BREATHING WHEN I ENTERED YOUR ROOM! THAT ALONE SHOULD HAVE TOLD ME YOU WERE NOT A VAMPIRE! A PERSON WHO BECOMES A VAMPIRE BY BEING BITTEN HAS NO HEARTBEAT DURING THE DAY! ANYONE KNOWS THAT! VAMPIRELLA IS DIFFERENT, OF COURSE, SINCE SHE COMES FROM THE PLANET DRAKULON, WHERE VAMPIRISM IS A NATURAL, INHERITED CHARACTERISTIC!

IT'S ALL RIGHT, DAD, WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES!



**MISTAKES** - YES! BUT MY STUPID MISTAKE ALMOST COST YOU YOUR LIFE! HOW COULD MY SIXTH SENSE HAVE TOLD ME SHE HAD PUT HER VAMPIRE'S BITE ON YOU? HOW COULD I HAVE BEEN SO WRONG? PERHAPS - PERHAPS I AM TOO OLD TO CONTINUE MY BATTLE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL!

DR. VAN HELSING, THERE'S SOMETHING... I MUST TELL YOU!

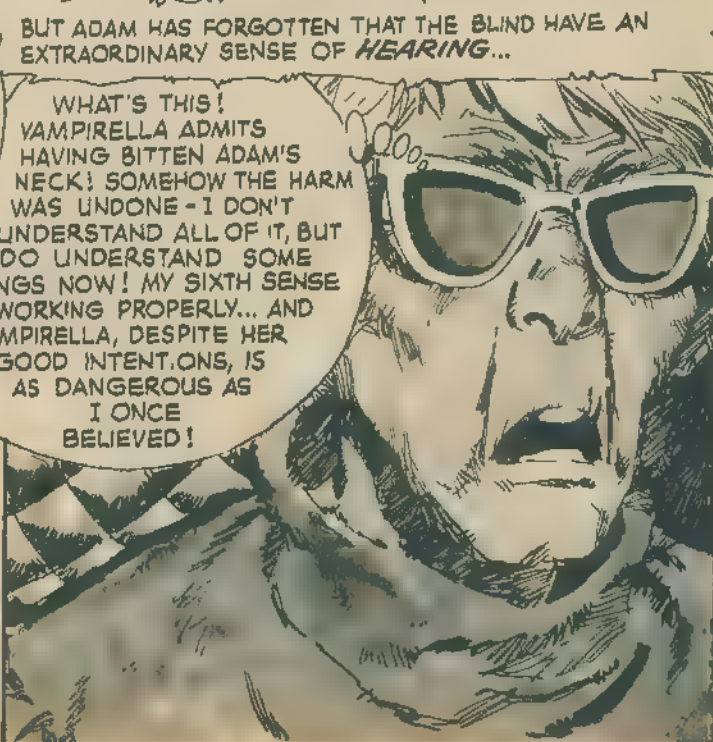


**VAMPIRELLA!** MAY I SPEAK WITH YOU IN THE NEXT ROOM - ALONE!



I CAN'T LET HIM GO ON DOUBTING HIMSELF LIKE THIS, ADAM! YOU AND I KNOW HE'S **RIGHT!** I **DID** BITE YOUR THROAT--AND THE ONLY REASON YOU'RE ALIVE NOW IS THAT IT ALL HAPPENED IN A DREAM WORLD\*, WHERE NOTHING WAS REAL! BUT I DIDN'T KNOW THAT AT THE TIME - THAT IS THE GUILT I MUST CARRY!

NO, YOU FOOL! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND THAT IF HE KNOWS THAT, HE'LL TRY TO KEEP US APART AGAIN! HE MUST NEVER BE TOLD WHAT YOU DID - WE HAVE FAR TOO MUCH TO LOSE!



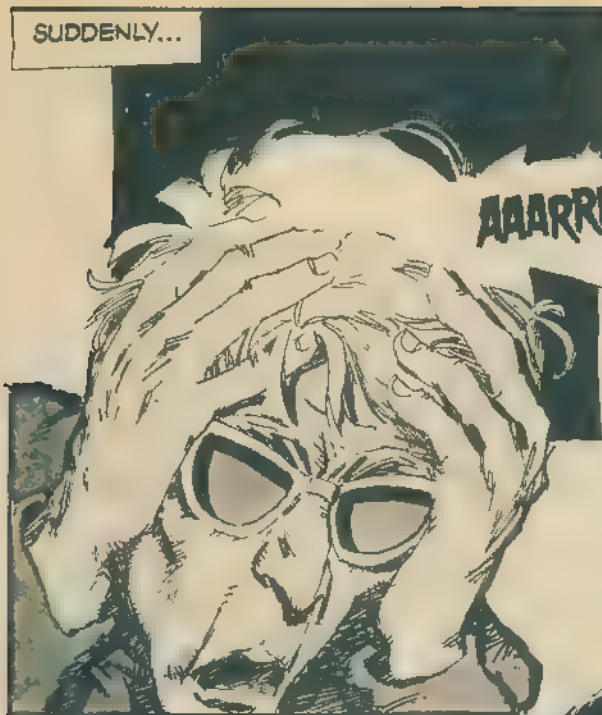
BUT ADAM HAS FORGOTTEN THAT THE BLIND HAVE AN EXTRAORDINARY SENSE OF **HEARING**...

WHAT'S THIS! VAMPIRELLA ADMITS HAVING BITTEN ADAM'S NECK! SOMEHOW THE HARM WAS UNDONE - I DON'T UNDERSTAND ALL OF IT, BUT I DO UNDERSTAND SOME THINGS NOW! MY SIXTH SENSE **IS** WORKING PROPERLY... AND VAMPIRELLA, DESPITE HER GOOD INTENTIONS, IS AS DANGEROUS AS I ONCE BELIEVED!

\* SEE VAMPIRELLA - "BEWARE, DREAMERS!"



SUDDENLY...



AAARRRGGGHHH!

DAD!  
WHAT'S  
WRONG!

MY SIXTH SENSE! I'VE  
JUST RECEIVED A MESSAGE  
OF UNIMAGINABLE HORROR! I WAS  
PREVENTED FROM RECEIVING IT  
BEFORE, BECAUSE MY THOUGHTS  
WERE TOO CENTERED ON YOU,  
SON! BUT NOW I FEEL IT...  
**DRACULA STILL LIVES!**

WHAT?!  
I THOUGHT  
WE'D KILLED  
HIM!



NO,  
VAMPIRELLA!  
MY SIXTH  
SENSE  
IS NEVER  
WRONG!

WHAT WAS THAT  
REMARK SUPPOSED  
TO MEAN? COULD HE  
HAVE HEARD US?

ALL RIGHT,  
I BELIEVE YOU!  
BUT WHAT  
CAN WE DO?

THIS TIME, I HAVE  
A PLAN! ADAM, GO  
TO THE EAST WING  
AND BRING ME  
**MERLIN'S MIRROR!**

ADAM'S  
FATHER IS NOT  
WITHOUT HIS  
OCCULT  
WARES.

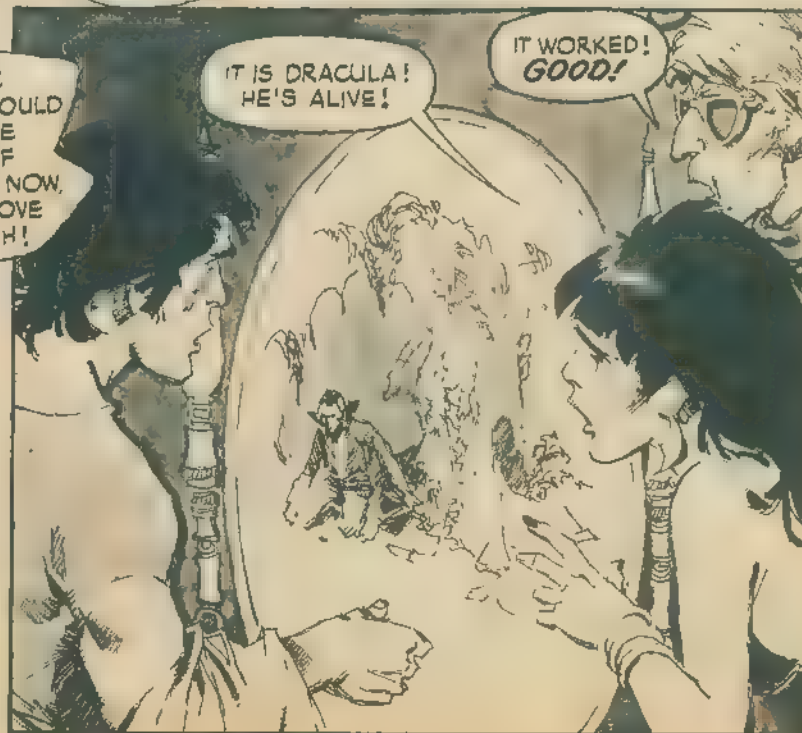
SOON...



MY PSYCHIC  
POWERS SHOULD  
BRING US THE  
VISION OF  
DRACULA! NOW,  
ADAM, REMOVE  
THE CLOTH!

IT IS DRACULA!  
HE'S ALIVE!

IT WORKED!  
**GOOD!**





CONRAD VAN HELSING  
EXPLAINS HIS PLAN...

FROM WHAT YOU'VE SEEN  
IN MERLIN'S MIRROR, AND  
FROM WHAT MY SIXTH SENSE  
TELLS ME, IT SEEMS THAT  
DRACULA HAS ENTERED SOME  
OTHER PLANE OF  
EXISTENCE! THAT  
MEANS WE CAN'T  
REACH HIM BY  
NATURAL  
MEANS!

BUT THROUGH THE MIRROR,  
WE CAN REACH HIM! MERLIN'S  
MIRROR IS ALSO A  
**TELEPORTATION DEVICE**...  
THROUGH WHICH WE CAN  
SEND VAMPIRELLA TO THE  
STRANGE WORLD WHERE  
DRACULA EXISTS! THERE-  
SHE CAN DESTROY HIM!

**VAMPIRELLA!?**  
NO, DAD, I CAN'T  
LET YOU! IT'S TOO  
DANGEROUS FOR  
HER! SEND **ME**  
INSTEAD!

**I MUST GO,**  
ADAM! NO MERE MORTAL  
HAS EVER MANAGED TO  
DEFEAT DRACULA FOR GOOD!  
THIS IS A TASK I MUST  
TAKE ON, USING ALL MY  
DRAKULONIAN POWERS!

THEN  
LET ME GO  
WITH YOU!

SOON...

GOOD BYE,  
VAMPIRELLA! I'LL  
HOPE FOR YOU... I  
GUESS THAT'S ALL  
I CAN DO!

SHE'S  
RIGHT-WHAT GOOD  
COULD I POSSIBLY  
BE TO HER? IF ONLY  
I HAD MORE TO  
OFFER! IF ONLY I  
COULD **HELP**  
HER IN SOME  
WAY!

DON'T WORRY,  
ADAM-I'VE BEEN  
THROUGH WORSE  
THAN THIS!

BUT NOT **MUCH**  
WORSE! BEFORE THIS  
IS THROUGH, I MAY NEED  
ADAM'S HELP! BUT I HAD  
TO REFUSE HIM--I CAN'T  
LET HIM RISK HIS LIFE  
FOR ME AGAIN! THE  
BATTLE AGAINST  
DRACULA IS MINE  
AND MINE ALONE!

REMEMBER,  
VAMPIRELLA-- WHEN  
DRACULA IS DESTROYED,  
YOU NEED ONLY **WILL**  
YOURSELF TO RETURN  
THROUGH THE MIRROR!

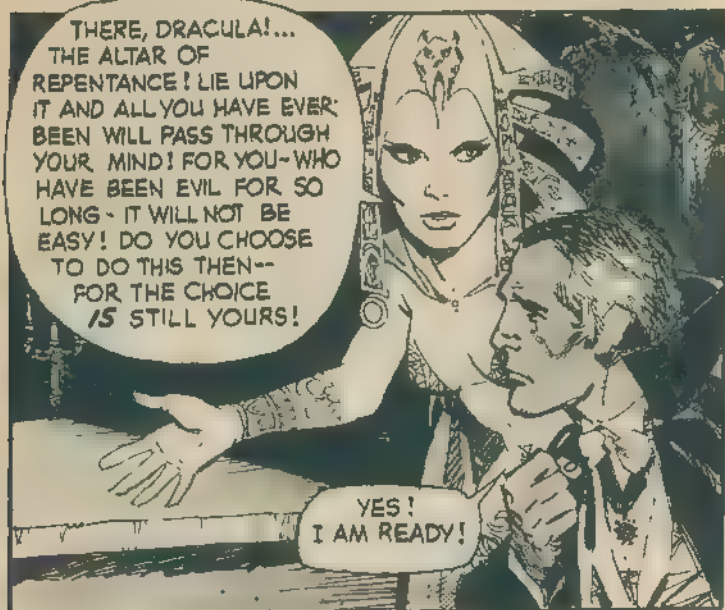
DAD!  
THE MIRROR IS  
CLOUDING-- I CAN'T  
SEE HER ANYMORE!

THE MIRROR  
IS OLD, ADAM! IT'S  
BEEN DRAINED BY THE  
ACT OF  
TELEPORTATION! NOW...  
WE CAN ONLY WAIT!

NO! I'M  
SORRY, ADAM!  
WE DON'T KNOW  
WHAT THAT OTHER WORLD  
BEYOND THE MIRROR IS  
LIKE! SOMEONE LACKING  
SUPERHUMAN POWERS  
MIGHT BE ONLY  
A HINDRANCE!



MEANWHILE, DRACULA WALKS THE *PATH OF ATONEMENT*...



THERE, DRACULA!...  
THE ALTAR OF  
REPENTANCE! LIE UPON  
IT AND ALL YOU HAVE EVER  
BEEN WILL PASS THROUGH  
YOUR MIND! FOR YOU-WHO  
HAVE BEEN EVIL FOR SO  
LONG- IT WILL NOT BE  
EASY! DO YOU CHOOSE  
TO DO THIS THEN--  
FOR THE CHOICE  
IS STILL YOURS!

YES!  
I AM READY!

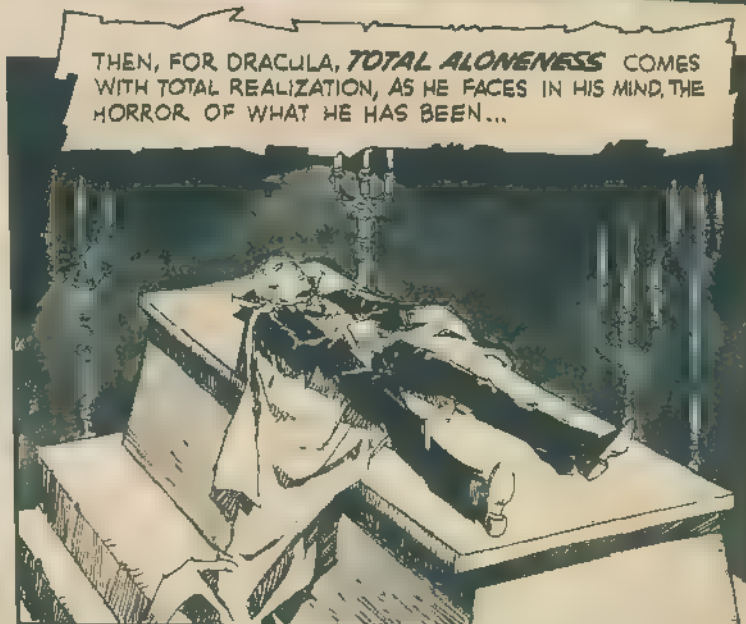


YOUR FIRST ORDEAL  
BEGINS NOW, DRACULA! THE  
TOTAL REALIZATION OF THE  
EVIL YOU HAVE DONE! AND-  
I FEAR- IT IS AN ORDEAL  
YOU MUST FACE  
WITHOUT ME!



NO!  
CONJURESS!  
WAIT!

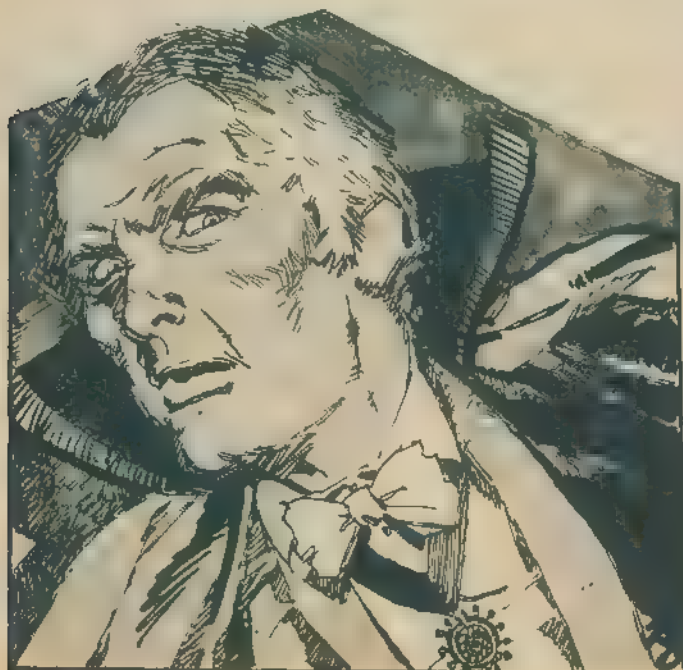
FAREWELL,  
DRACULA! I WILL  
WATCH OVER YOU,  
FROM AFAR, THOUGH  
I AM GONE!



THEN, FOR DRACULA, *TOTAL ALONENESS* COMES  
WITH TOTAL REALIZATION, AS HE FACES IN HIS MIND, THE  
HORROR OF WHAT HE HAS BEEN...

THE MEMORIES WEIGH HEAVY ON HIS TORTURED SOUL...

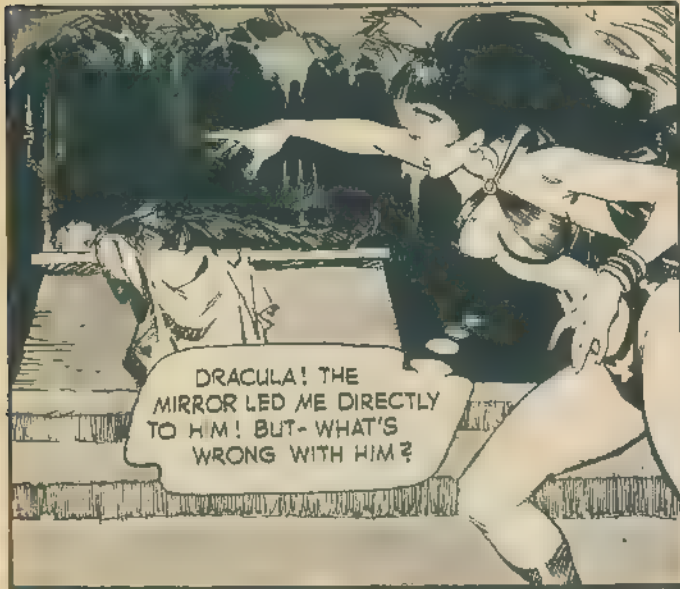
TILL AT LAST, HE IS DRAWN INTO HIS MEMORIES! HE LIES  
ON THE ALTAR OF REPENTANCE, SEMI-CONSCIOUS, SEMI-  
DELIRIOUS, ONLY DIMLY AWARE OF HIS SURROUNDINGS,  
BUT *PAINFULLY* AWARE OF THE AGONIZING MEMORIES,  
FLASHING THROUGH HIS MIND LIKE THE PAGES OF A  
BOOK BEING TURNED TOO FAST...



YAAAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!



THEN, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, *VAMPIRELLA* COMES...



DRACULA! THE MIRROR LED ME DIRECTLY TO HIM! BUT- WHAT'S WRONG WITH HIM?



CONJURESS! (CHOKE! GASP) YOU'VE RETURNED...

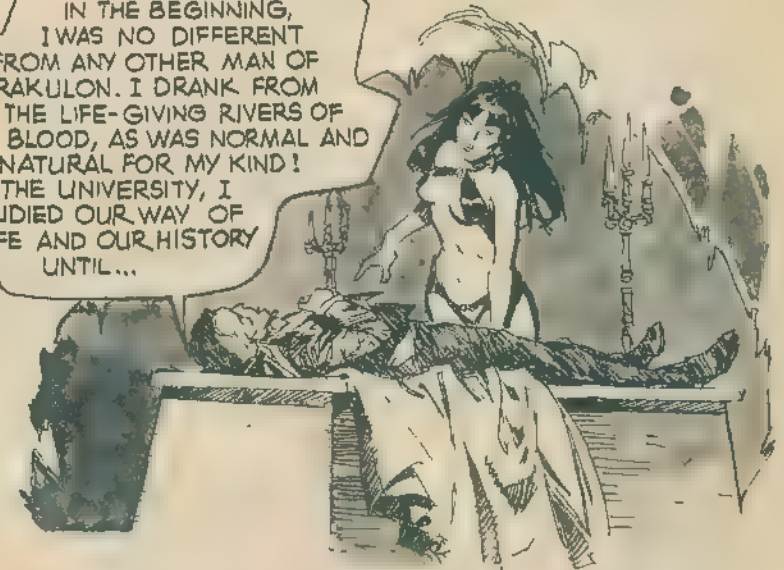
HE CALLS ME *CONJURESS*! HE'S DELIRIOUS... HE MUST THINK I AM THE WOMAN WE SAW THROUGH MERLIN'S MIRROR!



IN THE BEGINNING- (GASP)- IN THE BEGINNING...

FOR THE GOOD OF ALL MANKIND, I *MUST* KILL HIM! BUT WHAT HARM CAN IT DO TO PAUSE, AND LISTEN TO HIS LAST WORDS?

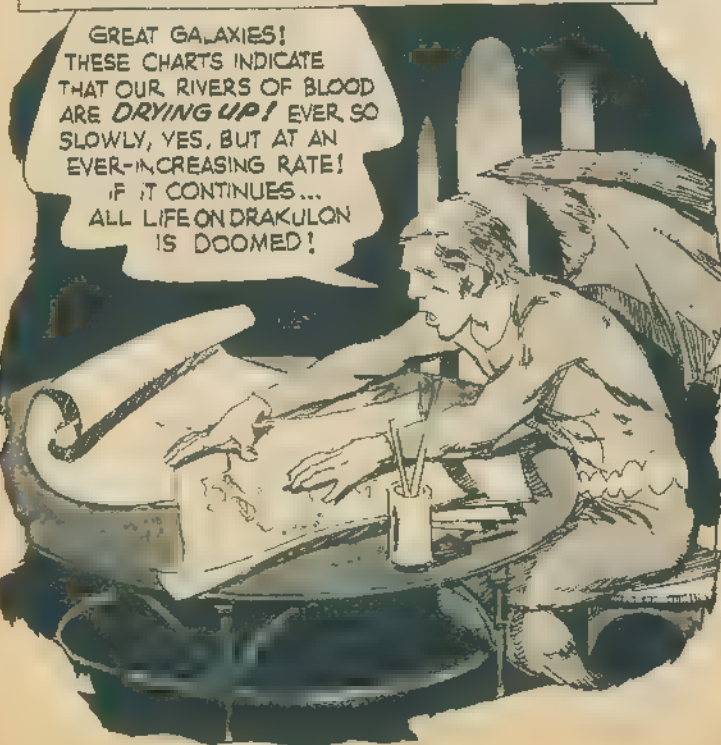
IN THE BEGINNING, I WAS NO DIFFERENT FROM ANY OTHER MAN OF DRAKULON. I DRANK FROM THE LIFE-GIVING RIVERS OF BLOOD, AS WAS NORMAL AND NATURAL FOR MY KIND! AT THE UNIVERSITY, I STUDIED OUR WAY OF LIFE AND OUR HISTORY UNTIL...



"I TOOK MY FINDINGS TO THE HIGH COUNCIL OF DRAKULON..."

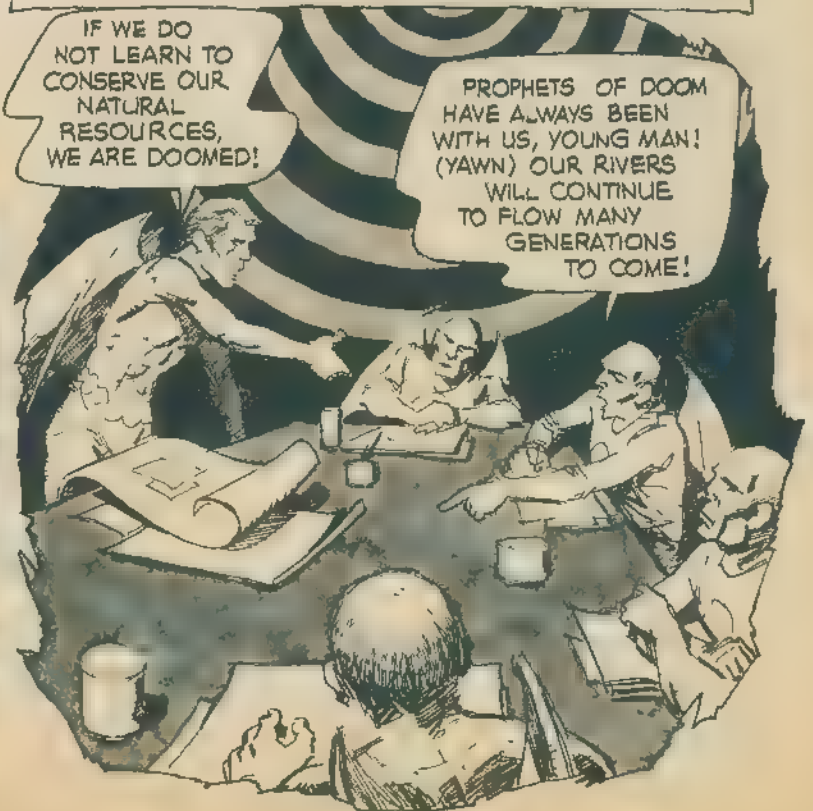
"UNTIL ONE DAY, I MADE A STARTLING DISCOVERY..."

GREAT GALAXIES! THESE CHARTS INDICATE THAT OUR RIVERS OF BLOOD ARE *DRYING UP!* EVER SO SLOWLY, YES, BUT AT AN EVER-INCREASING RATE! IF IT CONTINUES... ALL LIFE ON DRAKULON IS DOOMED!



IF WE DO NOT LEARN TO CONSERVE OUR NATURAL RESOURCES, WE ARE DOOMED!

PROPHETS OF DOOM HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WITH US, YOUNG MAN! (YAWN) OUR RIVERS WILL CONTINUE TO FLOW MANY GENERATIONS TO COME!





"WHEN NO ONE WOULD LISTEN, I SOUGHT AN ALLY THROUGH THE **OLD WAYS**... WITCHCRAFT!"



THE LEGENDS ABOUND-- OF A GODDESS KNOWN ONLY AS **THE CONJURESS**! IF INDEED SHE DOES EXIST, PERHAPS I CAN CALL HER TO ME, TO AID ME IN MY STRUGGLE!

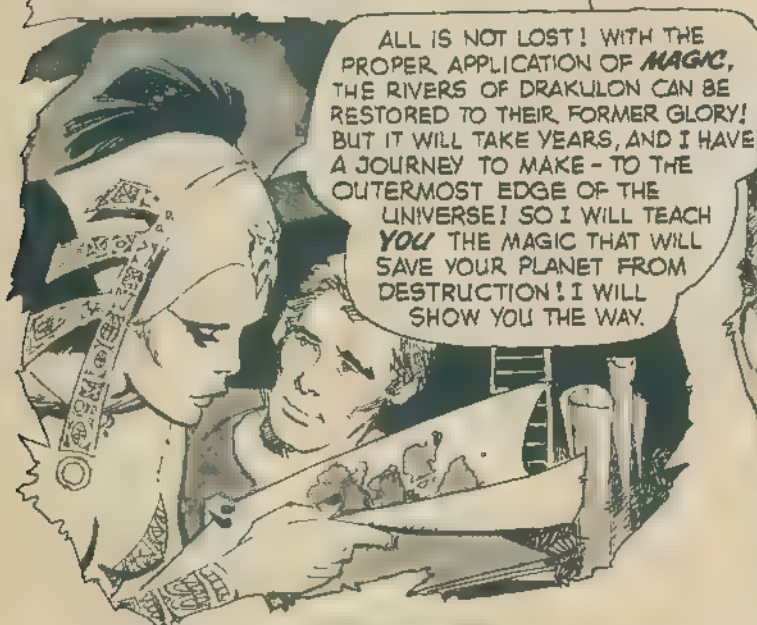
"THEN..."



I HAVE HEARD YOUR CALL! NOW-SPEAK! WHAT IS IT YOU WISH? IF IT IS JUST, I WILL TRY TO GRANT IT!

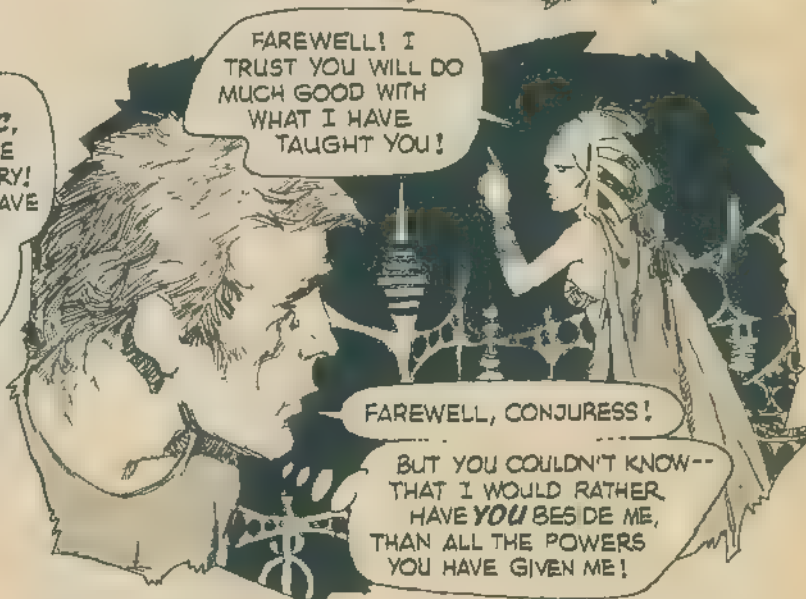
THE CONJURESS!

"AND IN THE WEEKS AND MONTHS TO COME..."



ALL IS NOT LOST! WITH THE PROPER APPLICATION OF **MAGIC**, THE RIVERS OF DRAKULON CAN BE RESTORED TO THEIR FORMER GLORY! BUT IT WILL TAKE YEARS, AND I HAVE A JOURNEY TO MAKE - TO THE OUTERMOST EDGE OF THE UNIVERSE! SO I WILL TEACH **YOU** THE MAGIC THAT WILL SAVE YOUR PLANET FROM DESTRUCTION! I WILL SHOW YOU THE WAY.

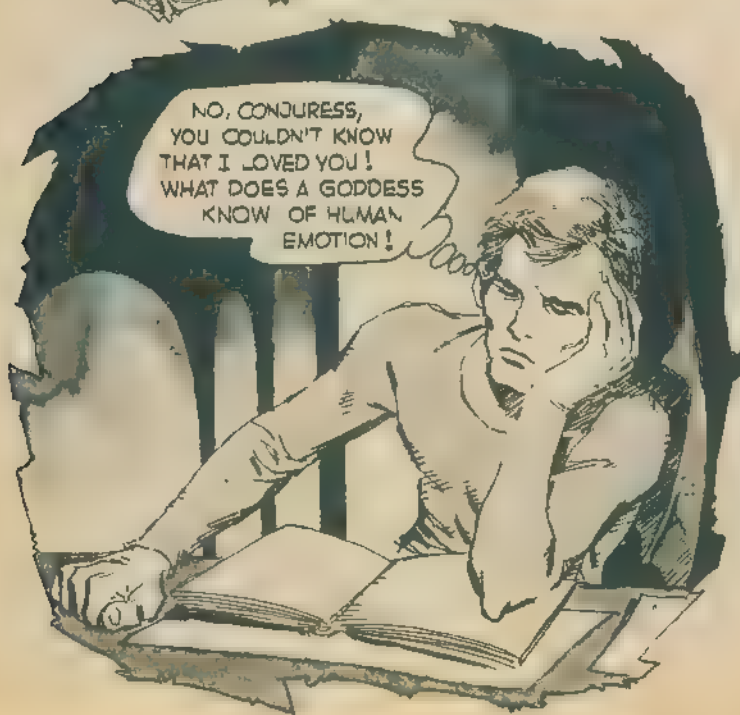
FAREWELL! I TRUST YOU WILL DO MUCH GOOD WITH WHAT I HAVE TAUGHT YOU!



FAREWELL, CONJURESS!

BUT YOU COULDN'T KNOW-- THAT I WOULD RATHER HAVE **YOU** BESIDE ME, THAN ALL THE POWERS YOU HAVE GIVEN ME!

"MY BITTERNESS GREW, UNTIL..."



NO, CONJURESS, YOU COULDN'T KNOW THAT I LOVED YOU! WHAT DOES A GODDESS KNOW OF HUMAN EMOTION!

THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE FIRST SPELL TO BE CAST! BUT CAN I **DO** IT, FEELING AS I DO?





"BUT AS I BEGAN THE SPELL..."

I MUST  
CALL THE SPIRITS  
TO HELP ME WITH MY  
MAGIC! BUT MY HEART IS  
FILLED WITH BITTERNESS,  
NOW THAT *SHE* IS GONE!  
WHAT MANNER OF EVIL  
THING WILL COME TO  
ME, IF I ATTEMPT THIS  
NOW? BUT NO  
MATTER-IT MUST  
BE DONE!

WHAT  
HAVE  
I DONE?!

YOU CALL,  
MAN OF DRAKULON!  
AND THE GREAT GOD  
*CHAOS* ANSWERS!

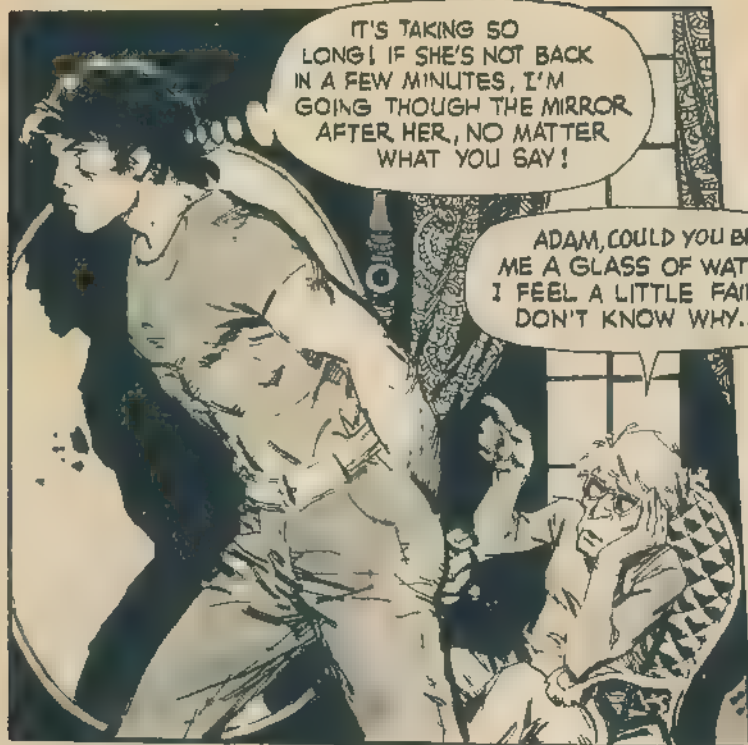
FORGET THE  
CONJURESS, FOOL!  
SHE CARED NOTHING FOR YOU--  
SHE IS GONE, AND YOU SHALL  
NEVER SEE HER AGAIN! THINK  
NOT OF YOUR COUNTRYMEN AT  
SUCH A TIME-FOR THEY TOO  
SCORN YOUR PATHETIC  
DEVOTION! *LET* ALL OF  
DRAKULON DIE--FOR...  
IF YOU SERVE ME, YOU  
SHALL LIVE ON!

THE STRENGTH  
OF *CHAOS* WAS TOO GREAT,  
AND MY OWN DESPAIR TOO  
DEEP! I BECAME HIS SERVANT,  
KILLING FELLOW DRAKULONIANS  
I HAD ONCE SWORN TO SAVE!  
AT LAST, I WAS EXECUTED ON  
DRAKULON... BUT *CHAOS* RENEWED  
ME... ORDERED ME TO EARTH!  
FOR CENTURIES, I SERVED HIM  
THERE, AS WELL! BUT THEN,  
CONJURESS, I SAW YOUR FACE  
AGAIN, AND REMEMBERED YOUR  
TRUST! I WANTED SO  
DESPERATELY... TO TURN  
BACK THE HANDS OF TIME,  
TO UNDO THE EVIL I HAVE  
DONE... TO BECOME  
AS I WAS...

HOW STRANGE TO  
HEAR THE REASONING OF  
EVIL! SAD! BUT I MUST NOT  
THINK OF THAT... I HAVE A DUTY...  
DRAKULA MUST DIE! MY FANGS  
WILL DRAIN THE LIFE BLOOD  
FROM HIS BODY, AND  
IT WILL BE OVER!



AND AT THE VAN HELSING FAMILY MANSION...

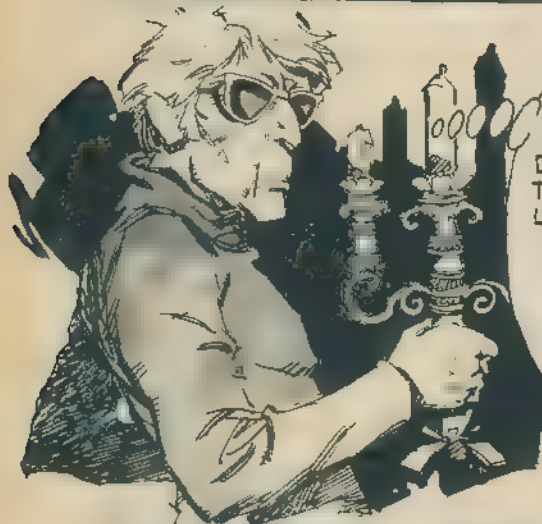


IT'S TAKING SO LONG! IF SHE'S NOT BACK IN A FEW MINUTES, I'M GOING THOUGH THE MIRROR AFTER HER, NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY!

ADAM, COULD YOU BRING ME A GLASS OF WATER? I FEEL A LITTLE FAINT... DON'T KNOW WHY...



THE CANDELABRA ON THAT TABLE! IF I CAN JUST FIND MY WAY TO IT AS SOON AS HE LEAVES THE ROOM-- I CAN **DESTROY THE MIRROR!**



GOT IT! I KNOW YOU WILL NEVER FORGIVE ME FOR THIS, ADAM! BUT IT MUST BE DONE-- FOR YOUR SAKE, AND THAT OF ALL MANKIND! AS LONG AS VAMPIRELLA LIVES, YOUR LIFE IS IN MORTAL DANGER-- FOR AT ANY MOMENT, SHE COULD BECOME THE BLOOD-LUSTING ANIMAL SHE **REALLY IS!**



I NEED ONLY SWING THE CANDELABRA AROUND--TO DESTROY VAMPIRELLA! SHE WILL BE TRAPPED IN THAT STRANGE WORLD WE SAW... WITH NO WAY BACK! BUT... BUT... IT'S SO HARD! NOW THAT I'VE COME TO KNOW HER AS A PERSON... I MUST, BUT **I CAN'T!**



**I CAN'T!**



DAD!  
NO!



STOP, DAD!  
PLEASE!

THEN...

UHHHH!

CRASH!

VAMPIRELLA!  
YOU'VE  
DOOMED HER!

SON, I'M  
SORRY! I WASN'T  
GOING TO GO  
THROUGH WITH IT!  
BUT IT'S TOO LATE  
NOW! IT'S TOO  
LATE!

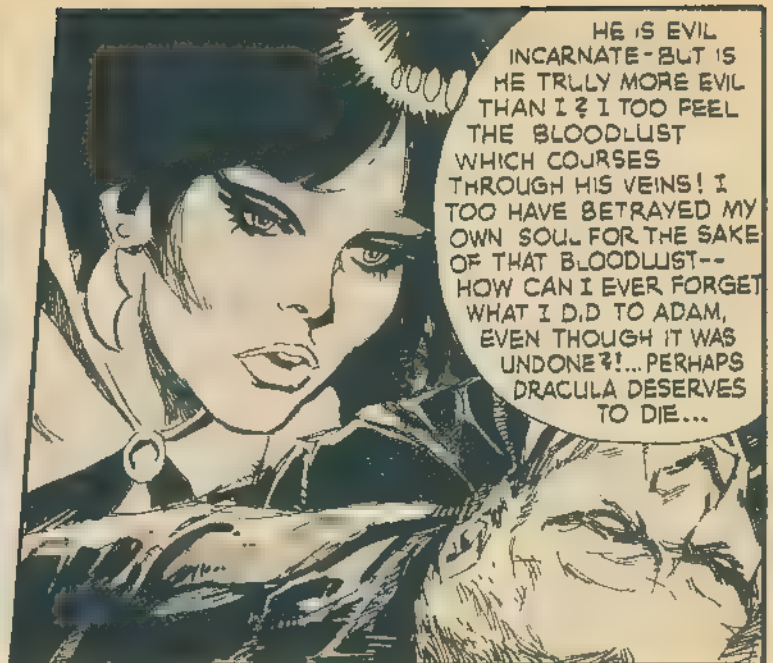
AT THAT SAME MOMENT, IN THE NOWHERE WORLD  
WHERE VAMPIRELLA PREPARES TO DESTROY  
DRACULA...

THE MIRROR!  
MY GATEWAY BACK!  
IT'S BEEN DESTROYED--  
I CAN FEEL IT IN  
MY BRAIN!

I'M DOOMED  
NOW! (CHOKE) BUT  
AT LEAST I CAN DO  
WHAT I CAME TO  
DO! FAREWELL,  
DRACULA!

SUDDENLY, DRACULA, STILL SEMI-DELIRIOUS IN  
HIS BELIEF THAT VAMPIRELLA IS THE CONJURESS,  
REACHES OUT AND TAKES HER HAND, SQUEEZING  
IT GENTLY...





SO DRACULA IS SAVED, BUT I AM DOOMED! WHAT STRANGE FATE LIES AHEAD FOR ME IN THESE CAVERNS, NOW THAT MERLIN'S MIRROR IS DESTROYED?!







YOU HAVE LEARNED WELL, VAMPIRELLA! YOU HAVE LEARNED TO SUBDULE THE **DRAKULONIAN INSTINCT** TO SOLVE EVERY PROBLEM BY KILLING! YOU HAVE LEARNED A QUALITY OF MERCY - EVEN TO YOUR ENEMIES - THAT YOU DID NOT KNOW BEFORE!

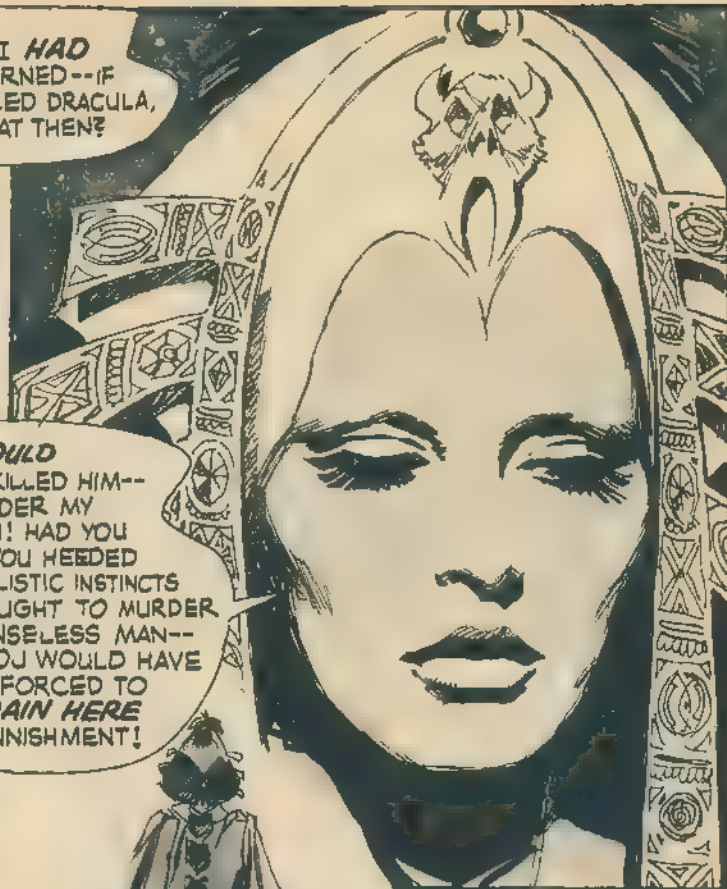
AND IF I **HAD NOT** LEARNED--IF I HAD KILLED DRACULA, WHAT THEN?

YOU **COULD** NOT HAVE KILLED HIM-- HE WAS UNDER MY PROTECTION! HAD YOU TRIED, HAD YOU HEEDED YOUR ANIMALISTIC INSTINCTS AND SOUGHT TO MURDER A DEFENSELESS MAN-- THEN YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN FORCED TO **REMAIN HERE** IN PUNISHMENT!



REMEMBER THEN, THE LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED HERE! NOW--RETURN TO YOUR OWN WORLD!

I-I'M VANISHING! THANK YOU, CONJURESS! FOR **ALL** YOU HAVE DONE!



SOMEDAY, PERHAPS, **ALL MANKIND** MAY LEARN THE SAME LESSONS THE ALIEN GIRL HAS!



IN ONE FLICKERING INSTANT, VAMPIRELLA IS HOME...

**VAMPIRELLA!** YOU'RE BACK!



BUT HOW??

NEVER MIND THAT, NOW! I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE-- I WASN'T ABLE TO KILL DRACULA!



VAMPIRELLA RELATES HER TALE TO ADAM AND HIS FATHER...

SO I COULDN'T KILL DRACULA! DO YOU BLAME ME FOR THAT, DR. VAN HELSING?

IT'S ALL RIGHT, DR. VAN HELSING! ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL! AND YOU *WERE* ONLY TRYING TO PROTECT ADAM! MAYBE SOMEDAY I CAN CONVINCE YOU THAT, DESPITE MY VAMPIRISTIC INSTINCTS, I WILL NEVER HARM, ADAM!

HOW CAN I BLAME YOU FOR ANYTHING, VAMPIRELLA, WHEN I VERY NEARLY CAUSED YOUR DEATH?

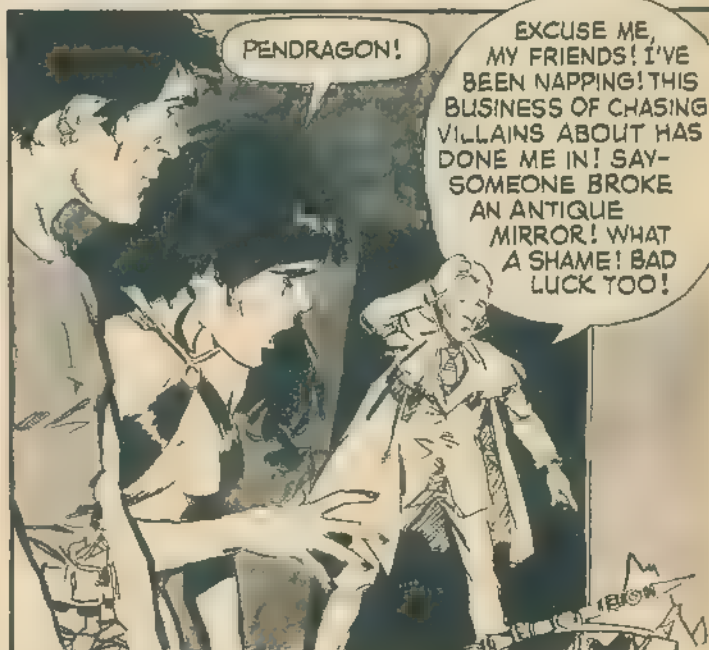
CONRAD BLURTS OUT HOW HE TRIED TO DESTROY MERLIN'S MIRROR, THEN *DID* DESTROY IT, ACCIDENTALLY...

MAYBE SOMEDAY I CAN CONVINCE MYSELF TOO!



PENDRAGON!

EXCUSE ME, MY FRIENDS! I'VE BEEN NAPPING! THIS BUSINESS OF CHASING VILLAINS ABOUT HAS DONE ME IN! SAY-SOMEONE BROKE AN ANTIQUE MIRROR! WHAT A SHAME! BAD LUCK TOO!



PENDRAGON-YOU DON'T KNOW *HALF* OF IT!



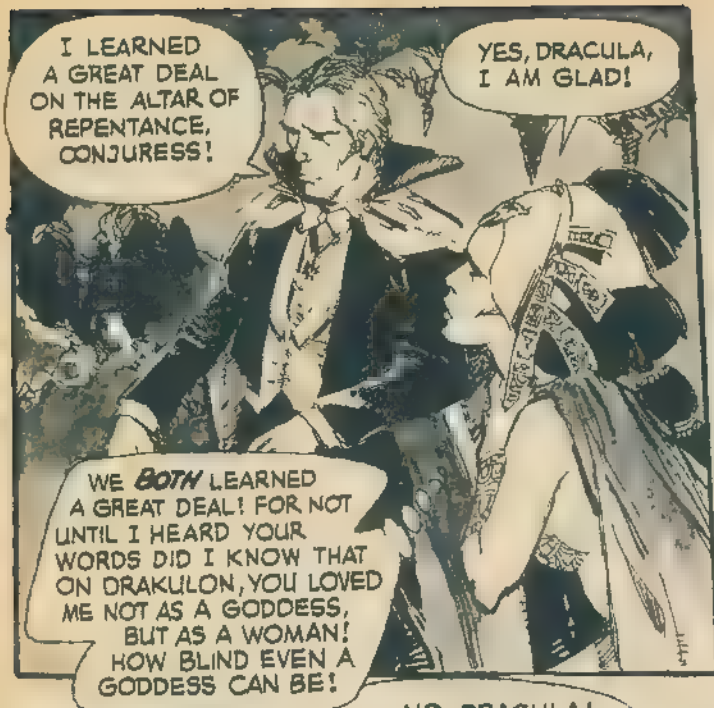
AND IN THE CAVERNS OF ATONEMENT, DRACULA RECOVERS HIS SENSES...

(GASP) IT'S OVER! MY WHOLE LIFE PASSED BEFORE MY EYES!

THEN WE ARE READY FOR THE *SECOND STEP!*







I LEARNED  
A GREAT DEAL  
ON THE ALTAR OF  
REPENTANCE,  
CONJURESS!

YES, DRACULA,  
I AM GLAD!

WE *BOTH* LEARNED  
A GREAT DEAL! FOR NOT  
UNTIL I HEARD YOUR  
WORDS DID I KNOW THAT  
ON DRAKULON, YOU LOVED  
ME NOT AS A GODDESS,  
BUT AS A WOMAN!  
HOW BLIND EVEN A  
GODDESS CAN BE!



WAIT! I REMEMBER  
SOMETHING ELSE!  
**VAMPIRELLA!** SHE  
WAS *HERE*-- IN MY  
DAZED STATE, I THOUGHT  
SHE WAS YOU! WHY--  
I COULD HAVE  
DESTROYED HER  
EASILY, HAD I  
KNOWN!

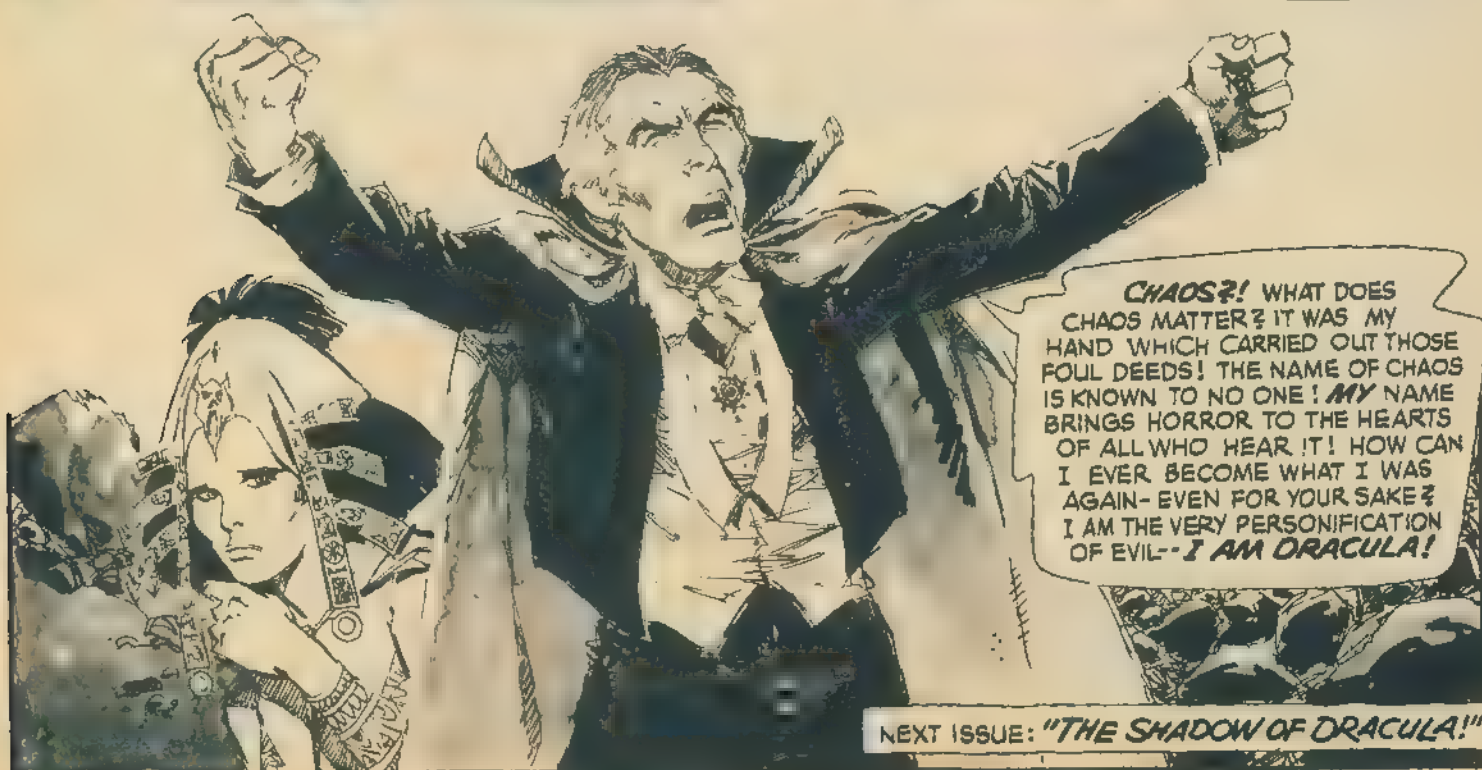


NO, DRACULA!  
YOU'RE RETURNING TO  
YOUR *OLD* WAYS! YOU MUST  
NOT! YOU MUST BE REBORN  
NOW-- YOU MUST FORGET  
THE PETTY HATREDS  
YOU ONCE KNEW!

AFTER SO MANY  
CENTURIES OF HORROR,  
SO MANY LIVES SNUFFED  
OUT BY MY HAND--THERE  
IS LITTLE LEFT WORTH  
SAVING! HOW THEN CAN  
I BE REBORN? CAN MY  
SOUL EVER BE WASHED  
CLEAN OF THE BLOOD  
OF A THOUSAND  
INNOCENT  
VICTIMS?



IT WAS EVIL  
DRACULA, BUT YOU  
DID IT UNDER THE  
SPELL OF CHAOS!  
IT WAS CHAOS  
WHO --

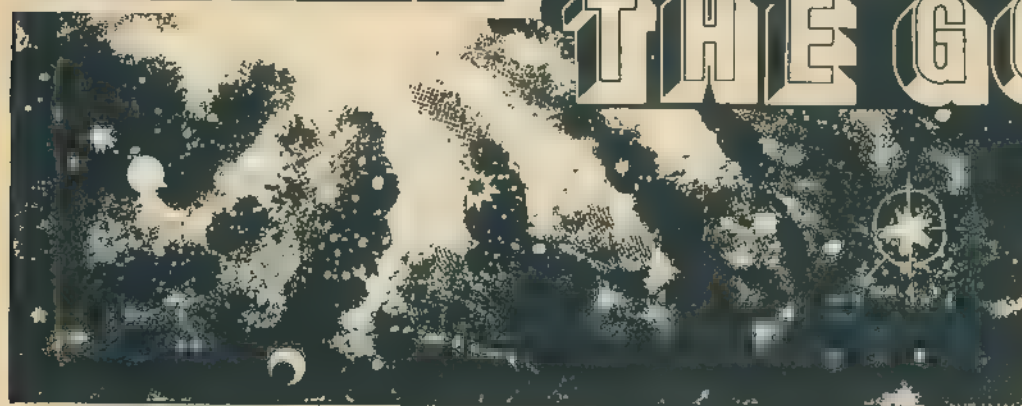


**CHAOS?!** WHAT DOES  
CHAOS MATTER? IT WAS MY  
HAND WHICH CARRIED OUT THOSE  
FOUL DEEDS! THE NAME OF CHAOS  
IS KNOWN TO NO ONE! *MY* NAME  
BRINGS HORROR TO THE HEARTS  
OF ALL WHO HEAR IT! HOW CAN  
I EVER BECOME WHAT I WAS  
AGAIN- EVEN FOR YOUR SAKE?  
I AM THE VERY PERSONIFICATION  
OF EVIL-- *I AM DRACULA!*

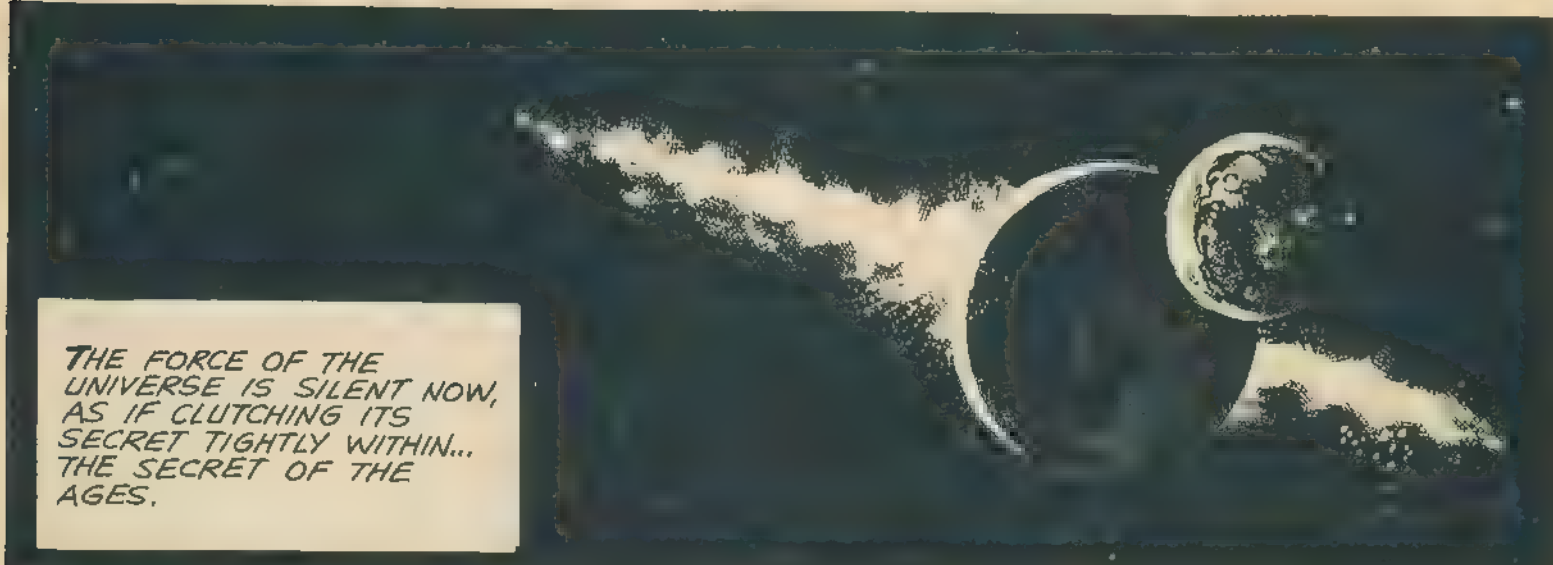
NEXT ISSUE: **"THE SHADOW OF DRACULA!"**




# KALI TOMB OF THE GODS




THE PAST LIES HIDDEN IN THE VAST RECESSES OF TIME AND SPACE, A THING UNKNOWN AMIDST THE EXPLOSIONS OF SULFUROUS FLAMES AND HOWLING GAS-SEOUS WINDS.




THE FORCE OF THE UNIVERSE IS SILENT NOW, AS IF CLUTCHING ITS SECRET TIGHTLY WITHIN... THE SECRET OF THE AGES.



PERHAPS IT IS HERE THAT MAN'S INBORN AWARENESS OF THE SUPERNATURAL AND BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF MYTH AND LEGEND BEGAN.



SINCE TIME'S DAWNING, ONLY A CHOSEN FEW HAVE POSSESSED THE VERY SECRET OF LIFE ITSELF.



IN THE HANDS OF MEN, POWER CORRUPTS... BECOMES AN INSTRUMENT OF EVIL.



THERE IS MIGHTY  
CALIGOR, MAGICIAN AND  
MURDERER IN THE  
CAUSE OF HEAVENLY  
GOOD.



WITNESS THE MAIDEN KALI,  
UNCONSCIOUS... A MOST HOSPIT-  
ABLE SACRIFICE. HER DEATH WILL  
PLEASE THE GREAT GOD AGNI  
AND GIVE US THE POWER  
WE SEEK.



FOR SHE IS THE ESSENCE  
OF LIFE ITSELF... WIND AND  
FLOWERS, FRESH AND  
YOUNG. OUR DUTY TO  
GOD AGNI AWAITS.  
LET US PREPARE THE  
DEATH RITUAL.



TAM  
TAM  
TAM



THE DRUMS OF THE VILLAGE HUM AND  
THE HYPNOTIC RHYTHM PLUNGES THE UN-  
CONSCIOUS KALI INTO A TRANCE... A  
TRANCE THAT SINGS OF FREEDOM.



HER SENSES DROWN  
IN A SEA OF VISIONS.  
FLUTTERING  
HUMAN WINGS  
PROMISE  
ESCAPE.

COME! COME AND LOVE  
ME! WAIT WITH ME. YOU  
ARE MY LIFE. DO NOT  
LEAVE. I AWAIT THE  
EMBRACE OF THE  
GREAT GOD AGNI.

OH, MAN MOST  
BEAUTIFUL! SOON I  
WILL POSSESS THOSE  
WINGS AND BE ONE  
WITH YOU!

TOGETHER WE  
ARE FREE. COME,  
EMBRACE ME WITH  
YOUR WINGS AND  
GIVE ME YOUTH  
ETERNAL!

AND I WILL LOVE  
YOU IN RETURN. SUCH  
LOVE AS YOU HAVE  
NEVER KNOWN! SOON  
I WILL BE AGNI'S  
BRIDE AND YOUR  
ETERNAL LOVE

BUT THE  
DREAM, LIKE  
ALL THINGS,  
MUST FADE...



EYES LIKE BURNING COALS  
TRANSFORM THE DREAM  
INTO A BRUTAL REALITY.



FOR THE TIGERS ARE THE  
INSTRUMENTS OF MAGICIAN  
CALIGOR'S SELFISH PLAN.  
THEY SIT CROUCHED,  
AWAITING NIGHTFALL AND  
A FEAST.



LET US GO, FELLOW TRIBESMEN.  
I AM AWARE OF THE TIGERS. SOON  
THEY WILL BEGIN MY WORK...  
THE MIRACLE OF  
THE SACRIFICE!

THE NIGHT IS ONE WITH THE  
DARKNESS OF THEIR HEARTS  
AS THEY TRUDGE THEIR WAY  
THROUGH THE COLD WASTE-  
LAND BACK TO THE VILLAGE.



DEEP, ROLLING GROWLS  
AWAKEN THE MAIDEN  
FROM HER TRANCE.

GREAT GOD AGNI! IS THIS  
WHAT THE MAGICIAN CALIGOR  
PROMISED ME? AM I TO  
BE TRANSFORMED INTO A  
FEAST FOR CRUEL  
BEASTS?



I WILL NOT RENOUNCE  
MY LIFE FOR THE WHIM  
OF A SELF-SERVING  
GOD AND HIS EVIL  
MAGICIAN!

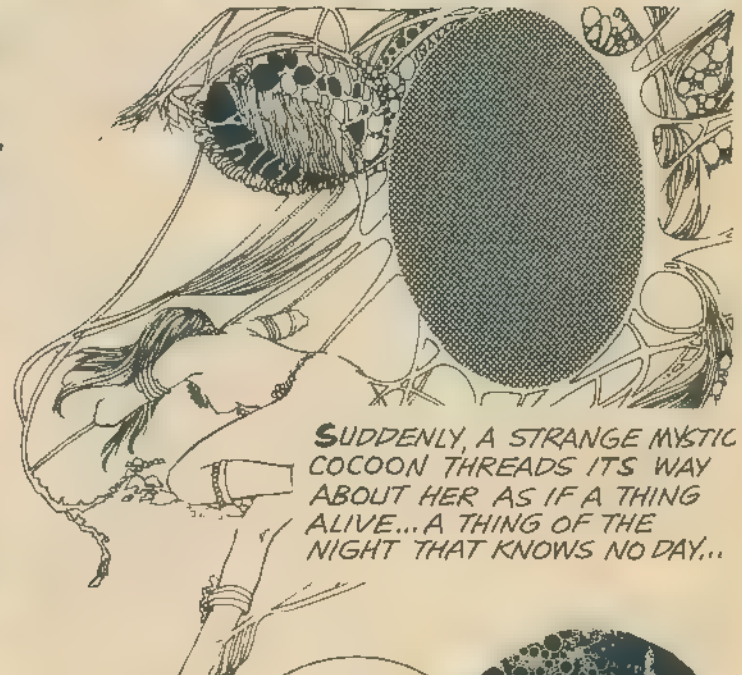
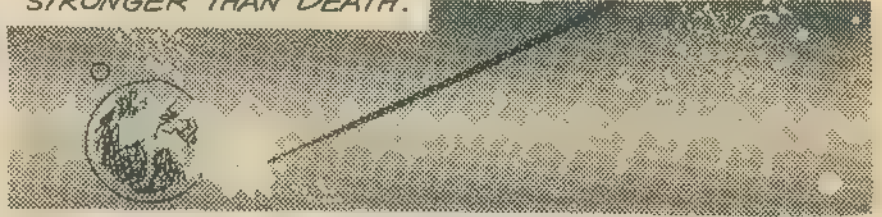




KALI WAITS, UNMOVING, A THING OF STILLNESS.

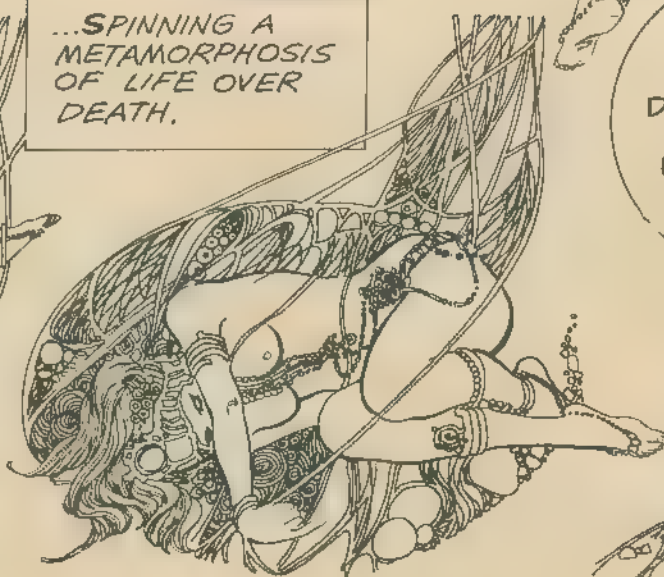


SOMEWHERE IN THE VASTNESS KNOWN AS SPACE, THE SILENT CALL OF KALI IS HEARD. THE STRENGTH OF HER LIFE REVERBERATES LIKE A WAIL THROUGH THE COSMOS, BECKONING TO THAT WHICH IS EVEN STRONGER THAN DEATH.

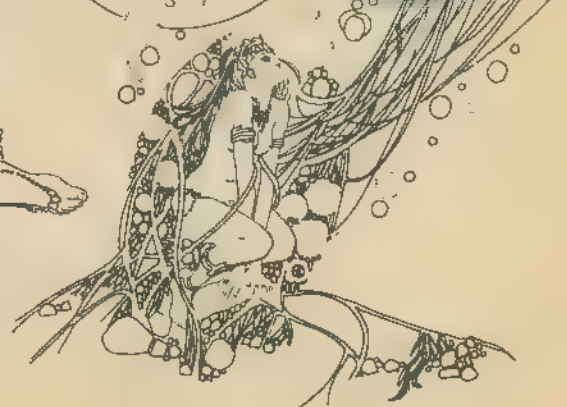
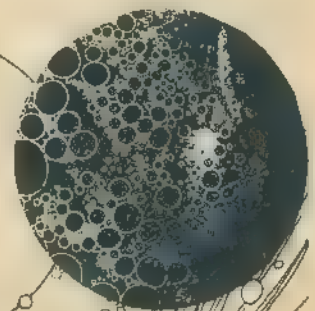


SUDDENLY, A STRANGE MYSTIC COCOON THREADS ITS WAY ABOUT HER AS IF A THING ALIVE... A THING OF THE NIGHT THAT KNOWS NO DAY...

...SPINNING A METAMORPHOSIS OF LIFE OVER DEATH.



WHAT IS THIS? WHY DOES THIS SILK ENFOLD ME?





"I AM SMOTHERING," SHE WHISPERS, "AS IF IN BIRTH... THOUGH I AM HELD BY NO CORD. ALREADY MY ARM FINDS FREEDOM."

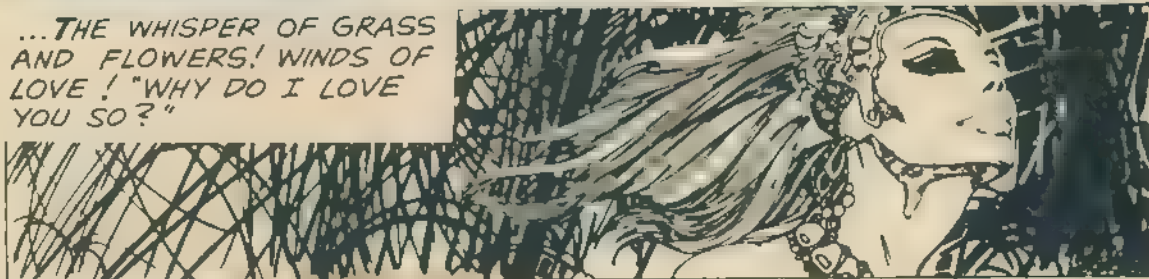


THE PAIN OF RE BIRTH COMPLETED, KALI EMERGES FROM HER SILKEN WOMB WITH POWERS YET UNKNOWN TO MORTAL MAN.



LIKE A WINGLESS BUTTERFLY, KALI IS CARRIED THROUGH THE WIND OF NIGHT

...THE WHISPER OF GRASS AND FLOWERS! WINDS OF LOVE! "WHY DO I LOVE YOU SO?"



SHE RUNS TO THE VILLAGE SHOUTING, "I AM KALI! I HAVE RETURNED! COME FORTH, FRIENDS! AND I WILL TELL YOU OF THE TIGERS!"



WARRIORS! TO ARMS! THE MAIDEN RETURNS!

BACK! KALI WILL NOT OFFER HER LIFE AGAIN! SHE HAS FOUND HER POWERS IN THE SACRIFICE!

KILL HER! SHE REFUSES TO BE AN OFFERING TO THE GODS!

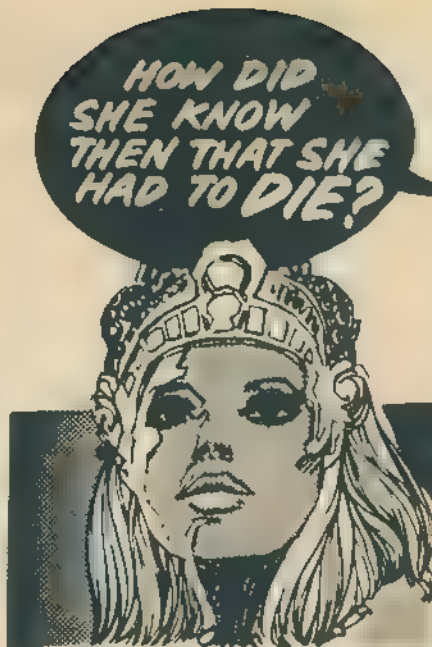






DISOBEDIENT FOOL!  
GREAT ARE THE GODS  
WRATH THAT WILL  
DESTROY YOUR  
VILLAGE!

THE GODS ARE  
NOT WRATHFUL,  
NOR DO THEY  
DESIRE THE  
DEATH OF  
MAIDENS.

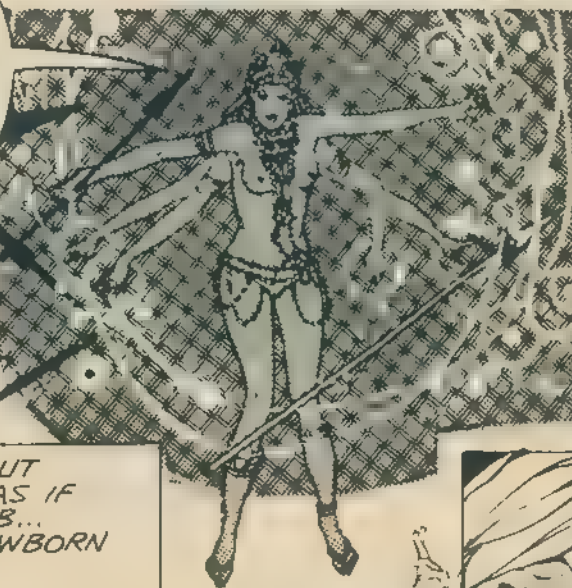


HOW DID  
SHE KNOW  
THEN THAT SHE  
HAD TO DIE?



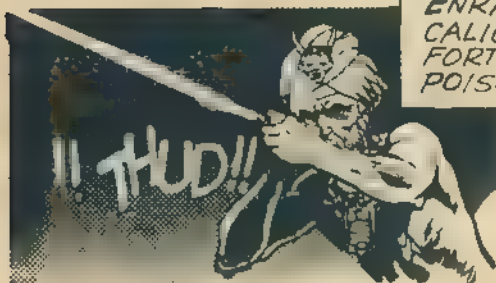
SHE  
MUST DIE!  
THE GOD AGNI  
DEMANDS HER  
DEATH!

IF DEATH AWAITS ME, THEN I,  
KALI, ACCEPT IT! I UNDER-  
STAND YOU, MAGICIAN. I  
KNOW IT IS TOO LATE FOR  
ME, AND TOO EARLY FOR THE  
BUTTERFLIES TO VISIT THE  
MEADOW!



WHY DO  
YOU WAIT?  
KILL HER!  
THROW YOUR  
SPEARS!

THE LANCES FLY BUT  
SUDDENLY HALT... AS IF  
CAUGHT IN A WEB...  
THE WEB OF A NEWBORN  
GODDESS!



ENRAGED,  
CALIGOR SPITS  
FORTH THE  
POISON DART...

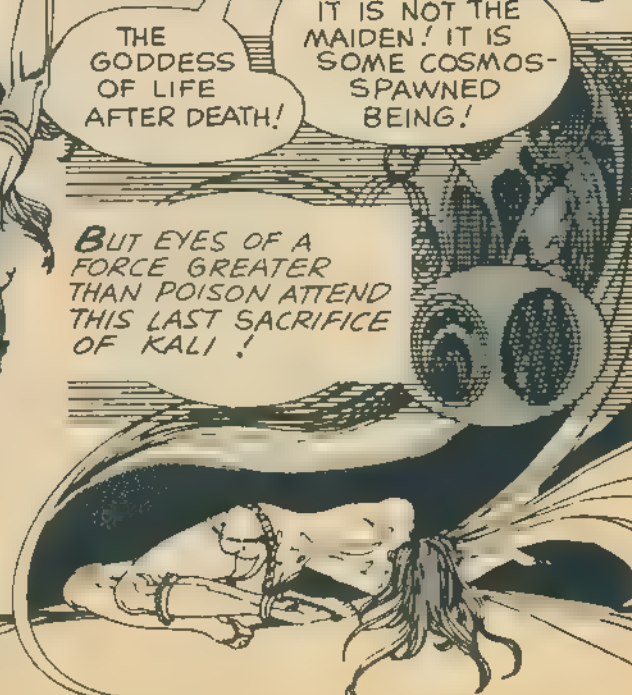


THE  
GODDESS  
OF LIFE  
AFTER DEATH!

IT IS NOT THE  
MAIDEN! IT IS  
SOME COSMOS-  
SPAWNED  
BEING!



BUT EYES OF A  
FORCE GREATER  
THAN POISON  
ATTEND  
THIS LAST SACRIFICE  
OF KALI!







ALL THINGS MUST  
KNOW AN END...AN  
END SOMETIME  
KNOWN AS  
DEATH

AND SO IT IS THAT THE MAGICIAN'S UNWITTING SKILL  
HAS TRANSFORMED THE MAIDEN KALI INTO A GODDESS...  
A GODDESS OF ETERNAL BEAUTY... THE WHEEL OF  
DEATH AND REBIRTH ENCIRCLES ALL THAT IS MORTAL  
WITH THE PROMISE OF IMMORTALITY.





PITY THE POOR PROTAGONIST OF THIS STORY, DAVID WINTERS, CAUGHT IN THE FILMY WEBBING OF LIFE... UNKNOWNING OF THE MANY LIVES OF WOMEN...



DAVID WINTERS HAS PLAYED THIS SCENE BEFORE. ONLY THE BIT PLAYERS CHANGE THE CHOREOGRAPHY. THE BIT PLAYER THIS TIME IS HARRIET STONE.



PLAY IT COLD. PLAY IT HARD. RE-ENACT THAT FIRM, STIFF WALK. ONLY THE FAINT CHILL OF THE NIGHT AUTUMN AIR SUGGESTS THIS ISN'T THE SAME EPISODE STAGED THREE MONTHS BEFORE TO A WARM JULY EVENING.



THE TORN SOBBINGS, THE MASCARA BLEED TEARS HAVE BEEN MIRRORED ON OTHER YOUNG FACES. IT IS HARDLY NOTICEABLE THAT OTHER LINGS RIP OUT THESE SOBS, THAT NEW EYES SPILL THESE TEARS.



JUST FAINT TREMORS ABOUT THE FINGERS BETRAY ANY EMOTION TO THE ABRUPT TERMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP. A TYPICAL REACTION.



IT DOESN'T GET ANY MORE DIFFICULT, JUST THE FAMILIAR NAGGING DREAD OF THE PARTING SCENE. NO SWEET SORROW HERE, BABY!



# "SONG OF A SAD-EYED SORCERESS"

THE LAST THOUGHT FADES TO NEW ST. MULI. WINTERS SEES ONLY THE SWEEP OF HER BACK, THE GRACEFUL FALL OF HER HAIR, AND YET SOMETHING CATCHES IN HIS THROAT AND A STRANGE SCENT CATCHES AT HIS NOSTRILS.



WHO..... WHO ARE YOU?



YOU WISH TO KNOW WHO I AM DAVID WINTERS?

I AM **NAHEMAH!** AND BEFORE THIS NIGHT IS THROUGH YOU WILL KNOW ME LIKE YOU HAVE KNOWN NO OTHER WOMAN!

THAT I CAN PROMISE YOU, DAVID WINTERS!





HARRIET STONE HAD ONLY BEEN WORKING FOR KELLY AND LISSON, INC., FOR LITTLE OVER A WEEK WHEN DAVID WINTERS HAD FIRST WALKED INTO HER LIFE, DELIVERING ONE OF THOSE SMUG, ARTIFICIAL SMILES, SHE ASSUMED, THAT HE USUALLY DELIVERED IN EXECUTIVE SUITES AND SHE HAD BEEN ALSO AWARE THAT HE WAS NOT ONLY ON THE MAKE IN A BUSINESS SENSE, HIS ENTIRE LIFE STYLE WAS ONE CONTINUOUS 'MAKE-IT' DRIVE.



THAT HAD BEEN HER FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH DAVID WINTERS. IN FACT, IT HAD BEEN HER FIRST ACTUAL ENCOUNTER WITH ANYBODY IN NEW YORK CITY SINCE HER ARRIVAL. SHE HAD LOOKED INTO THE DUSTY MIRROR EACH MORNING, ASSURING HERSELF THAT SHE HAD NO STARS IN HER EYES, THAT SHE WAS TOUGH AND SELF-RELIANT; BUT AS THE NIGHT CITY SOUNDS DRIFTED UP INTO HER TENEMENT ROOM THE RETURN LOOK WAS NOT AS FIRM, AND - DESPITE THE NEAR RELIGIOUS LECTURES SHE HAD PREACHED SILENTLY TO HERSELF - DAVID WINTERS BECAME THE FIRST RECOGNIZABLE FACE.



THE STING OF THE AUTUMN WIND SHARPENS ON HIS CHEEKS AS HE STEPS FORWARD. A DIM VOICE PLEADS WITH HIM NOT TO TAKE THE STEP, BUT HIS MOVEMENTS ARE NOT OF HIS OWN VOLITION.



I...I HAVE SEEN YOU BEFORE.

YOU HAVE SEEN MY FACE MIRRORED IN OTHER FACES. I AM ALL THOSE FACES COMBINED, WITH THE SPECIFICS OF EACH.



I DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU SAY YOUR NAME IS NAHEMAH.

AH, BUT HAVE YOU NEVER HEARD MY NAME BEFORE, DAVID?

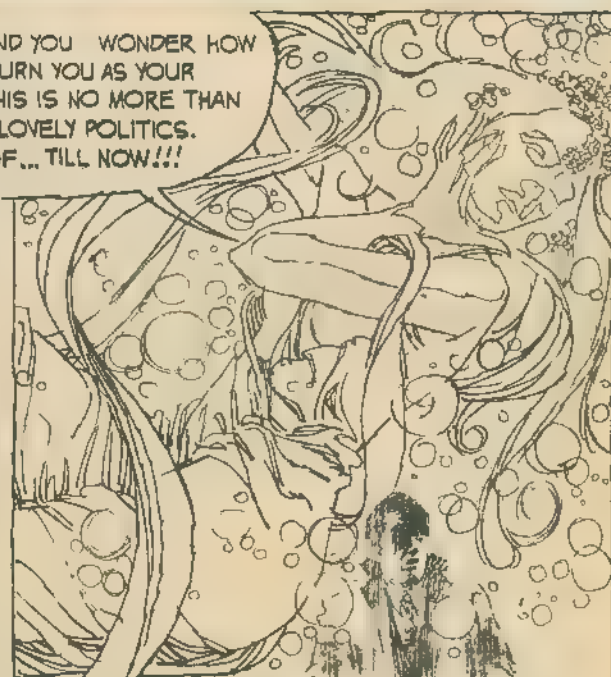
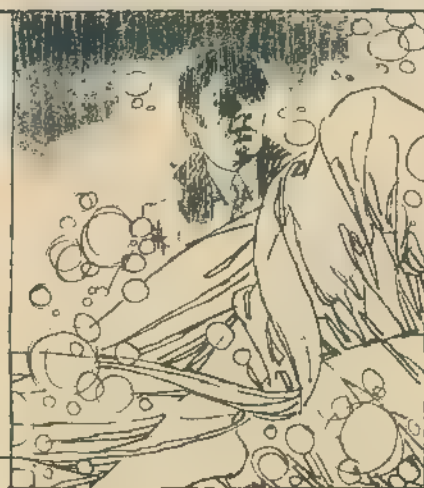


WAIT A MINUTE!!! I JUST DON'T GRAB THIS!! HOW DO YOU KNOW MY NAME?

BUT I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU, DAVID, FOR I HAVE BEEN WITH YOU AT YOUR WEAKEST MOMENTS.



YOU HAVE MORE QUESTIONS. THEY BURN YOUR MIND. I SENSE THEM AND YOU WONDER HOW I SENSE THEM. YOU DESIRE TO TOUCH MY FLESH AND HAVE MY FLESH BURN AS YOUR QUESTIONS DO. SO FOLLOW ME, DAVID WINTERS, FOLLOW ME, FOR THIS IS NO MORE THAN AN INNOCENT PARK WHERE LOVERS HAVE SPENT SPRING MOMENTS IN LOVELY POLITICS. POLITICS WHICH YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE A MASTER DEMAGOGUE OF... TILL NOW!!!



THE SAME DIM VOICE THROWS OUT THE WARNING AGAIN, BUT DAVID WINTERS KNOWS IT IS A LOST CAUSE, THAT HE WILL FOLLOW THE FLOWING APPARITION, THAT THE DECISION HAS BEEN DETERMINED IN A PART OF HIM THAT HE HAS NEVER VISITED BEFORE.



THE WEEKS HAD PASSED -- LONE, SOLITARY WEEKS SPLINTERED WITH BRIEF MOMENTS OF HUMAN CONTACT DURING OFFICE HOURS; AND HARRIET STONE HAD REALIZED THAT SHE HAD NEVER BEEN IN THE MIDST OF SO MANY PEOPLE, NOR HAD SHE EVER BEEN SO ALONE.

JUST DON'T GET ANY WEIRD IDEAS, DAVID.



BEYOND THAT THESE CO-WORKERS OF HERS GOT ALL THE BREAKS AND BENEFITS WHICH ADDED TO HER LAMENT.

SHE HAD KNOWN DAVID WINTERS GAME; SHE HAD KNOWN HE WAS TRYING TO SCORE ALL THROUGH THOSE UNCTUOUS MONOLOGUES THAT HE DELIVERED. YET, FINALLY, TO COMPENSATE FOR THE HOSTILITY AND ALONENESS, SHE YIELDED. ONE MEETING LEADING TO ANOTHER, BOTH OF THEM PLAYING THE USUAL MALE-FEMALE POLITICS....

WHO ME? WOULD I DO ANYTHING LIKE THAT?



.... UNTIL THAT NIGHT SHE HAD INVITED HIM TO HER APARTMENT.

YES. I THINK YOU WOULD. STAY HERE WHILE I FIX US A DRINK IN THE KITCHEN. HAVE A LOOK AROUND.



QUITE A PAD YOU'VE GOT HERE, AND LISTEN, I'M SORRY ABOUT THE COME-ON THE PAST FEW WEEKS. GUESS IT'S THE PRESSURE, YOU KNOW?

CHANGE OF TACT, DAVID?



LISTEN, HARRIET, YOU'VE GOT THE MOST SUSPICIOUS MIND THAT...

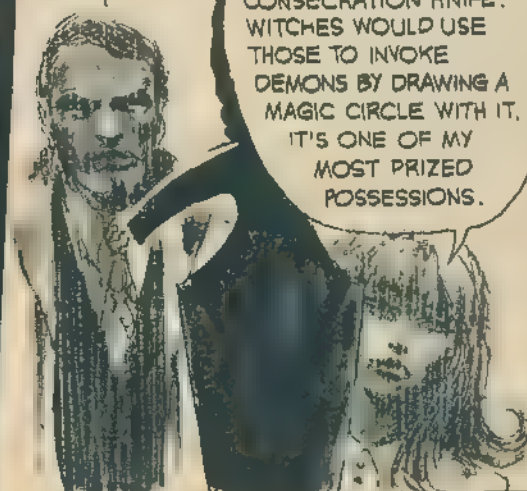


WHAT IN THE HELL IS THAT?

OH, I SEE YOU'VE DISCOVERED MY ATHAME.

YOU'RE WHAT?

ATHAME! DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE OCCULT ARTS? IT'S A CONSECRATION KNIFE. WITCHES WOULD USE THOSE TO INVOKE DEMONS BY DRAWING A MAGIC CIRCLE WITH IT. IT'S ONE OF MY MOST PRIZED POSSESSIONS.



HARRIET STONE HAD LISTENED TO WINTERS REPLY, STILL AWARE AS TO HIS NATURE. SHE HAD REMAINED STOIC, UNATTAINABLE THROUGH-OUT HIS SOPHISTICATED RAP, PLEASED THAT ANOTHER PERSON SHARED THE ROOM FOR THE MOMENT; AND SHE HAD ALSO BEEN AWARE THAT HER PASSION FOR THE OCCULT WAS A FACET OF HER WINTERS HAD NEVER SUSPECTED....

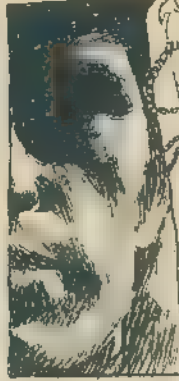
....AND THROUGHOUT THAT EVENING HE COULD NEVER REALLY FORGET THE BLADE OF ATHAME RESTING UNDER THE FLOOR-LAMP.



TWO SECTIONS OF WINTER'S MIND BATTLE FOR DOMINANCE. ONE SECTION IS FILLED WITH THE FLEEING SPECTRE BEFORE HIM, BUT THE OTHER SECTION IS GRIPPING AT SOME THIN EDGE OF NORMALITY.

WHO IS THIS CREATURE WHO BECKONS AND SWAYS BEFORE HIM, ENTICING HIM ONWARD WITH EVERY FLUID MOVEMENT, EACH SUPPLE CURVE DEMANDING OBEDIENCE? IS HE FALLING PREY TO SOME PSYCHOTIC FEAR OF WOMEN THAT HE HAS HELD IN CHECK DURING HIS ENTIRE LIFE?

BUT THAT IS FOOLISHNESS. YET, IF IT IS FOOLISHNESS, THEN WHY CAN'T HE STOP HIS FEET FROM MOVING OUT ONTO THAT BRIDGE? WHY IS THE DESIRE TO POSSESS BURNING SO FERVENTLY IN HIS VEINS? AND NAHEMAH, SHE IS LIKE SOME SYMBOLIC LIFE-FORM WHOSE CREATION AND PURPOSE HAS BEEN LOST IN THE PASSAGE OF TIME. WHY IS THAT?



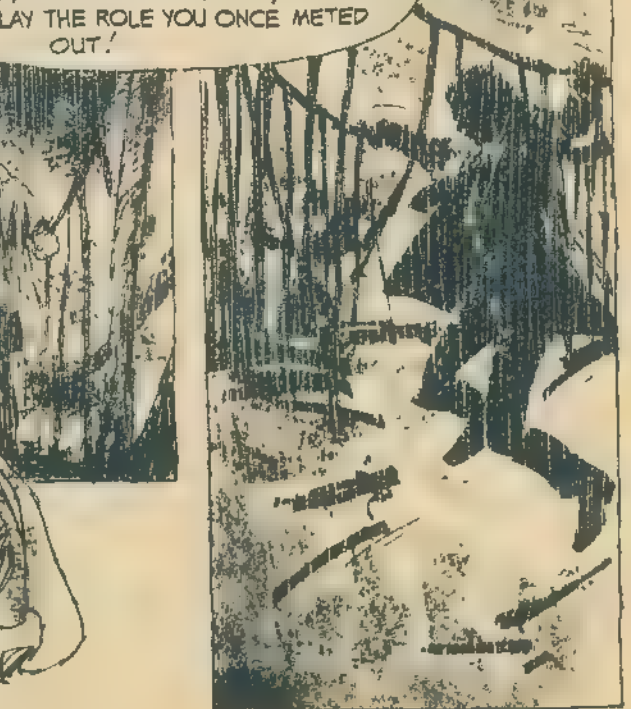
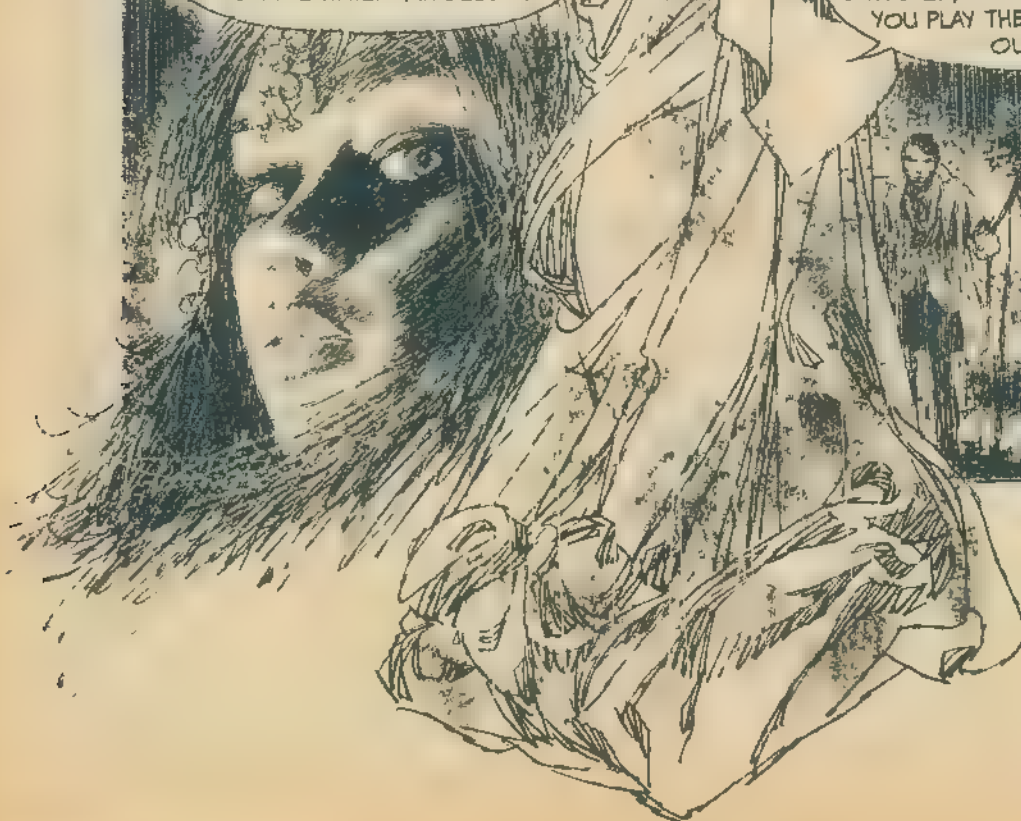
FOLLOW ME DAVID WINTERS, FOR OUR MEETING IS PREORDAINED.

I SENSE THE FEAR THAT CUTS YOUR HEART! IT MINGLES WITH YOUR DESIRE FOR ME! BUT FIRST YOU MUST COME TO ME.



CROSS THE BRIDGE, MY SWEET, AND THEN YOU CAN HAVE ME. JUST A FEW SHORT STEPS! IGNORE THE DISTANT SOUND OF THE RUSHING WATER FAR BELOW.

HAS THIS SCENE PLAYED BEFORE DAVID? DO YOU PERCEIVE ITS ORIGINS? EVEN THROUGH YOUR FEAR, THE THOUGHT TANTALYZES YOU! BUT THE PARTS HAVE BEEN SWITCHED, YOU DO REALIZE THAT, DON'T YOU? YOU PLAY THE ROLE YOU ONCE METED OUT!





HARRIET STONE HAD PLAYED THE GAME, FOLLOWING THE PRESCRIBED FORMULA, INCLUDING ALL THE TENTATIVE MOVES AND DOUBLE ENTENDRES.

SHE HAD PLAYED THE GAME AND PLAYED IT WELL, TRYING TO REMAIN AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THAT WAS ALL IT WAS: A GAME.

IT HAD BEEN THE COMMON NEED, THE ONE TRAIT THAT LINKED THEM, WHICH HAD FINALLY COMPLETED THE CHARADE.



SHE HAD HEARD HERSELF UTTERING WORDS THAT WERE SCHOOL-GIRL TEXT, WORDS SHE HAD KNOWN BETTY FRIEDAN WOULD M FROWN UPON; AND SHE FELT ALTERNATE SENSATIONS — A MINGLING OF NEED WITH A FEELING OF FAILURE.

HONEY, YOU'RE REALLY FINE, YOU KNOW THAT?

DAVID, I'M..... I'M NOT SO SURE!

THE SOFT, MELLOW SOUNDS OF FRANK SINATRA CROONING LOST LOVE IN THE BACKGROUND HAD ADDED THE FINAL TOUCH TO THE SCENE. SHE HAD WONDERED HOW MANY SUCH SCENES HAD BEEN PRESIDED OVER, VOCALLY, BY THE KING.

LISTEN, WE BOTH NEED IT, RIGHT? YOU KNOW YOU REALLY WANT THIS.

AND SHE HAD STILL KNOWN THAT IT WAS ONLY A GAME, BUT THERE WAS ONE SLIGHT CHANGE: SHE HAD BEEN WISHING THAT PART OF IT COULD BE... REAL.

I JUST DON'T WANT TO BE HURT, THAT'S ALL.

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN DAVID, I JUST WANT SOME PART OF ME LEFT, SOME PART OF ME THAT'S MINE ALONE.

NO ONE'S GOIN' TO HURT YOU, HONEY. THAT'S NO JIVE.

RIGHT NOW, I WANT YOU, BABY!





THE WIND LIFTS, CARRYING NAHEMAH'S CARRESSING VOICE TO HIM, THE WORDS A CHANTING MOCKERY AS THE GAPING CHASM BELOW GRIPS AT THE CENTER OF WINTER'S STOMACH

HOW MANY SONGS HAVE YOU LISTENED TO, YET NEVER HEARD THE LYRICS?

YET, THERE IS A POWER GREATER THAN THAT OF THE YAWNING ABYSS; AND IT IS MIRRORED IN NAHEMAH'S EYES, A KINDLING SPARK THAT DISRUPTS THE NIGHT AIR AND SEARS HIS FLESH, SOME BASIC PART OF HIM FIGHTS TO RETAIN HIS IDENTITY.

WHAT WHISPERED HOPES ENFLAMED ON YOUR COVENANT WASHED TO DYING EMBERS?

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?..... SERMONETTES?

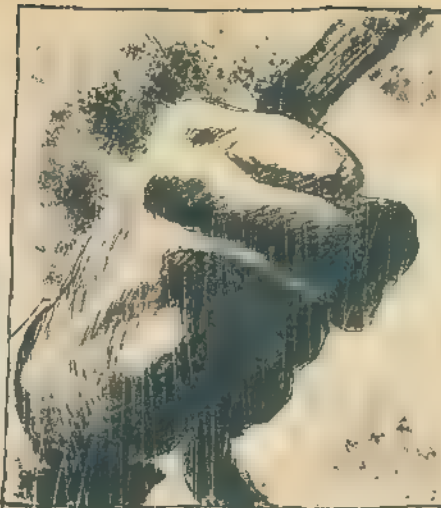
THAT'S ONE DAMNED THING I DON'T NEED, SISTER! YOU BROADS ARE ALL ALIKE!

BUT YOU..... YOU'RE THE FREAKIEST WITCH I'VE EVER SEEN!

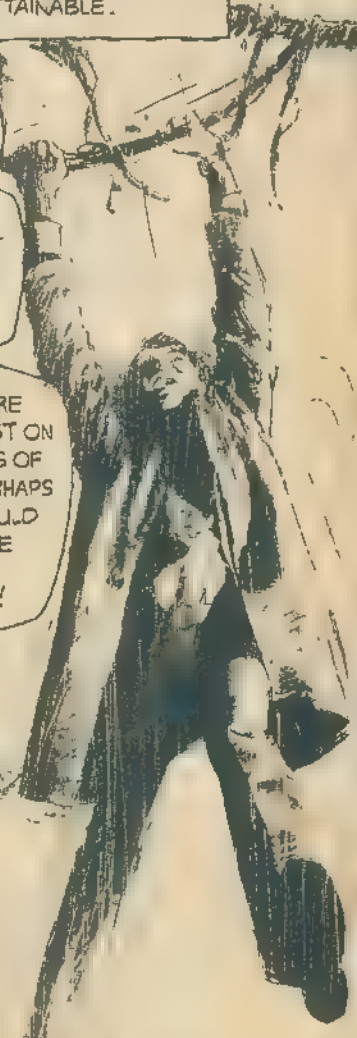
NOT WITCH, DAVID!

HAVEN'T YOU REALIZED YET WHAT I AM? DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT I REPRESENT?

OR ARE YOU NOT AWARE SUCH BEINGS AS I EXIST ON THE PERIPHERAL EDGES OF YOUR WORLD.... OR PERHAPS SUCH KNOWLEDGE WOULD SHATTER YOUR FRAGILE PHILOSOPHY, DEAR SWEET DAVID!!!!

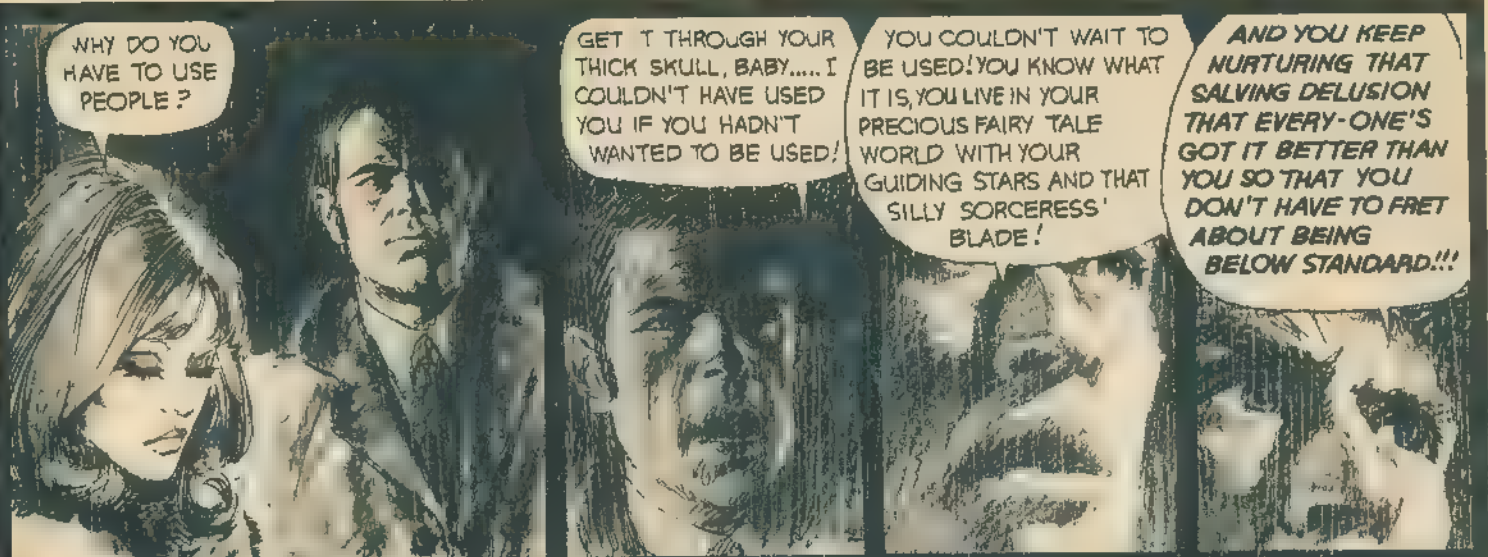


WINTER'S HEART LURCHES CRAZILY IN HIS CHEST, SLAMMING HIS BLOOD FIERCELY TO HIS HEAD. HIS HANDS GRASP AT AIR, AND HIS BODY SWAYS WITH THE BREEZE, WAVERING THE DARKNESS PATIENTLY AWAITING HIS ARRIVAL WHILE NAHEMAH STANDS ALOOF AND UNATTAINABLE.





HARRIET HAD SEEN THE MECHANISMS AT WORK. SHE HAD KNOWN WHAT FUNCTIONS EACH MOVEMENT WINTERS SUPPLIED MEANT. YET, SHE HAD IGNORED THEM, DESIRING INSTEAD A TIME OF RELIANCE TO SELF-RELIANCE. SHE DESERVED THAT MUCH, SHE HAD SOOTHED HERSELF, AWARE THERE WOULD COME A TIME WHEN SHE WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR THAT CONVENIENCE.

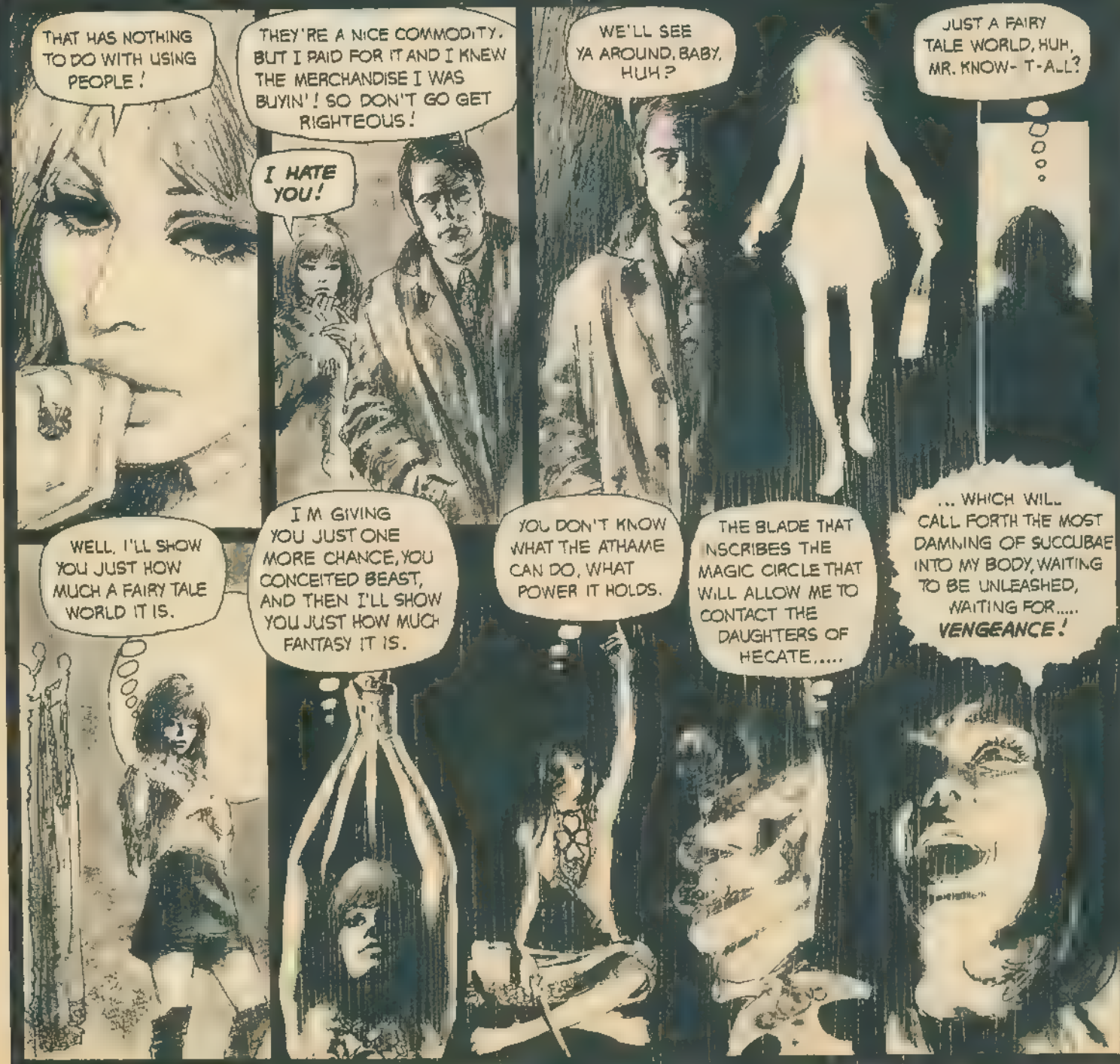


WHY DO YOU HAVE TO USE PEOPLE?

GET T THROUGH YOUR THICK SKULL, BABY.... I COULDN'T HAVE USED YOU IF YOU HADN'T WANTED TO BE USED!

YOU COULDN'T WAIT TO BE USED! YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS, YOU LIVE IN YOUR PRECIOUS FAIRY TALE WORLD WITH YOUR GUIDING STARS AND THAT SILLY SORCERESS' BLADE!

AND YOU KEEP NURTURING THAT SALVING DELUSION THAT EVERY-ONE'S GOT IT BETTER THAN YOU SO THAT YOU DON'T HAVE TO FRET ABOUT BEING BELOW STANDARD!!!



THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH USING PEOPLE!

THEY'RE A NICE COMMODITY, BUT I PAID FOR IT AND I KNEW THE MERCHANDISE I WAS BUYIN'! SO DON'T GO GET RIGHTEOUS!

I HATE YOU!

WE'LL SEE YA AROUND, BABY, HUH?

JUST A FAIRY TALE WORLD, HUH, MR. KNOW- T-ALL?

WELL, I'LL SHOW YOU JUST HOW MUCH A FAIRY TALE WORLD IT IS.

I'M GIVING YOU JUST ONE MORE CHANCE, YOU CONCEITED BEAST, AND THEN I'LL SHOW YOU JUST HOW MUCH FANTASY IT IS.

YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT THE ATHAME CAN DO, WHAT POWER IT HOLDS.

THE BLADE THAT INSCRIBES THE MAGIC CIRCLE THAT WILL ALLOW ME TO CONTACT THE DAUGHTERS OF HECATE.....

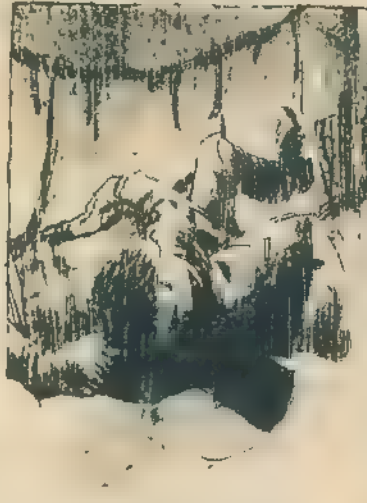
... WHICH WILL CALL FORTH THE MOST DAMNING OF SUCCUBAE INTO MY BODY, WAITING TO BE UNLEASHED, WAITING FOR.....  
**VENGEANCE!**



WINTERS HOVERS AT THE BRINK WITH DEATH AND LIFE WAITING ON THE SIDES. HE HAS NEVER BEEN THIS CLOSE TO DEATH BEFORE AND YET THERE IS STILL A CURIOUS SENSATION THAT IT IS HAPPENING TO SOMEONE ELSE.



A TENTATIVE STEP, THE FEAR STILL CLUTCHING AT HIS INSIDES, AND HIS BALANCE IS RESTORED.



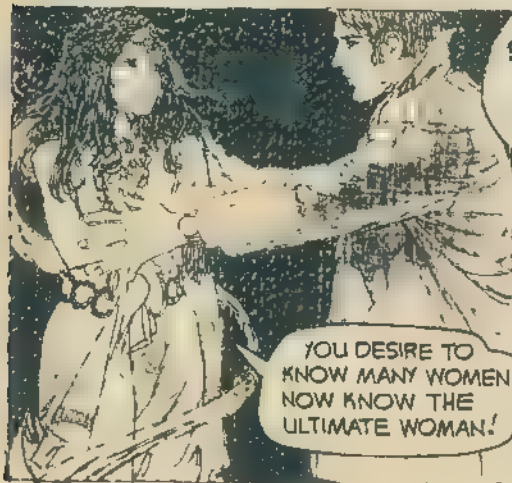
THE TERROR SUBSIDES IN HIS BREAST AS HE CONTINUES ACROSS THE TERMITE AND WEATHER-EATEN BRIDGE.



NAHEMAH'S UNEARTHLY BEAUTY RESUMES ITS HOLD. HE HAS NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE HER BEFORE, YET AT THE SAME TIME HE HAS KNOWN SEPARATE PARTS OF HER.

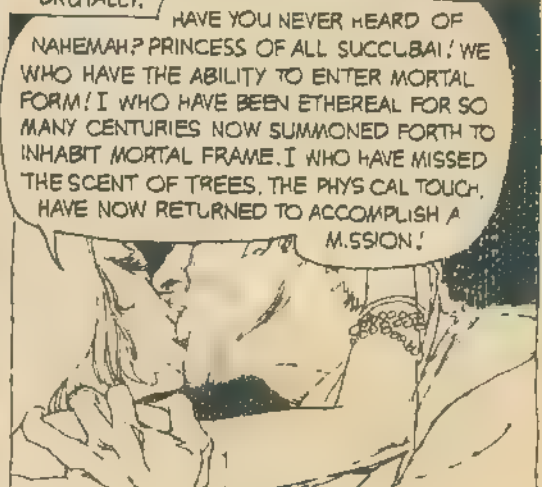
HER BREATH IS WARM AND EXOTIC. HER SCENT FILLS HIS NOSTRILS. HER TOUCH IS ELECTRIC, AND THESE ARE EMOTIONS HE CANNOT COMPREHEND.

HE WANTS TO RUN; HE WANTS TO CONQUER HER. FOR ONE FIERCE MOMENT, AS HE GRIPS THE UNEARTHLY BEAUTY TO HIM HE REGAINS HIS FORMER CONFIDENCE AND CLUTCHES HER BRUTALLY.



DO YOU KNOW OF THE **EMPUSAE**? ANCIENT AND LOVING FEMALE DEMONS SUMMONED FORTH WITH THE ATHAME BLADE!

YOU DESIRE TO KNOW MANY WOMEN. NOW KNOW THE ULTIMATE WOMAN!



HAVE YOU NEVER HEARD OF NAHEMAH? PRINCESS OF ALL SUCCUBAI! WE WHO HAVE THE ABILITY TO ENTER MORTAL FORM! I WHO HAVE BEEN ETHEREAL FOR SO MANY CENTURIES NOW SUMMONED FORTH TO INHABIT MORTAL FRAME. I WHO HAVE MISSED THE SCENT OF TREES, THE PHYSICAL TOUCH, HAVE NOW RETURNED TO ACCOMPLISH A MISSION!

HIS COMMAND IS SHORT-LIVED, FOLLOWED WITH A LAUGHTER THAT WHIPS ON THE COLD NIGHT WIND AND TEARS AT HIS EARS.

SATIN FLESH TURN TO SCALEY COILS BENEATH HIS FINGERS. SOFT WARMTH BLENDS TO SERPENTINE CHILL.

THE CHANGE SHREDS WINTER'S SANITY, HIS ENTIRE BEING RIPPED OPEN AND EXPOSED WITH A MIND THAT SEEKS DESPERATELY TO COMPREHEND WHAT CANNOT BE COMPREHENDED.



WITH THE POWER TO TURN YOUR LUST.....



..... TO REVULSION!!!!





OH SACRED DAUGHTER  
OF HECATE, PRINCESS OF  
THE SUCCUBAI...

COME FORTH INTO  
THIS WORLD OF  
PLASTIC...

COME FORTH INTO THIS  
WORLD OF OVER-POPULATION  
WHERE LONELINESS AND  
ALIENATION ARE DEEPER  
THAN EVER.

AND FEEL THE  
HURT OF YOUR FLESH AND  
BLOOD SISTERS AS YOU  
ENTER MY BEING, FEEL THAT  
HURT AND SEEK  
JUSTIFICATION.



I AM  
HERE, HARRIET  
STONE.

I CAN SENSE  
IT. MY MIND IS  
ONE WITH YOURS.  
THEY MINGLE.

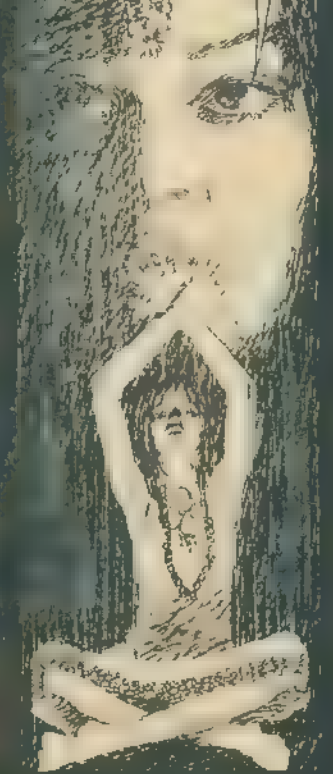
YOU MUST RELAX  
AND LET ME TAKE  
POSSESSION. ALL READY  
I BEGIN TO REALIZE THE  
SENSATIONS I HAVE  
MISSED SO MANY YEARS.  
THROUGH YOUR FINGERS  
I NOW HAVE TOUCH.  
BUT SOON IT WILL BE  
MY TOUCH.

NOT YET. HE  
MUST HAVE ONE  
MORE CHANCE. IF HE  
DOES NOT RELENT,  
THEN I WILL LET YOU  
TAKE FULL POSSESSION.  
BUT YOU WILL NOT  
LIKE THIS WORLD.

YOU SAY IT IS IMPERSONAL.  
BUT THERE ARE SO MANY  
OF YOU

YES, BUT IT IS  
THAT WAY. AND CRUEL.  
I SOMETIMES WONDER  
HOW ANYONE CAN  
WANT TO LIVE IN THIS  
JUNGLE, THIS SOOT  
AND GRIME

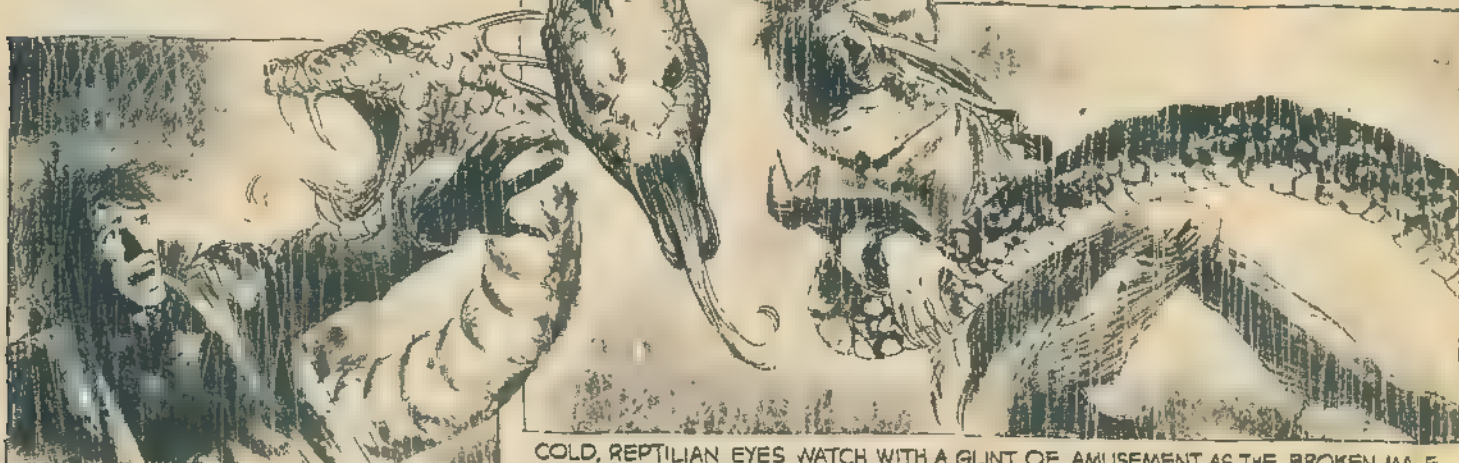
BUT NOW YOU  
ARE WITHIN ME, SISTER,  
AND I FEEL A ONENESS  
WITH YOU!





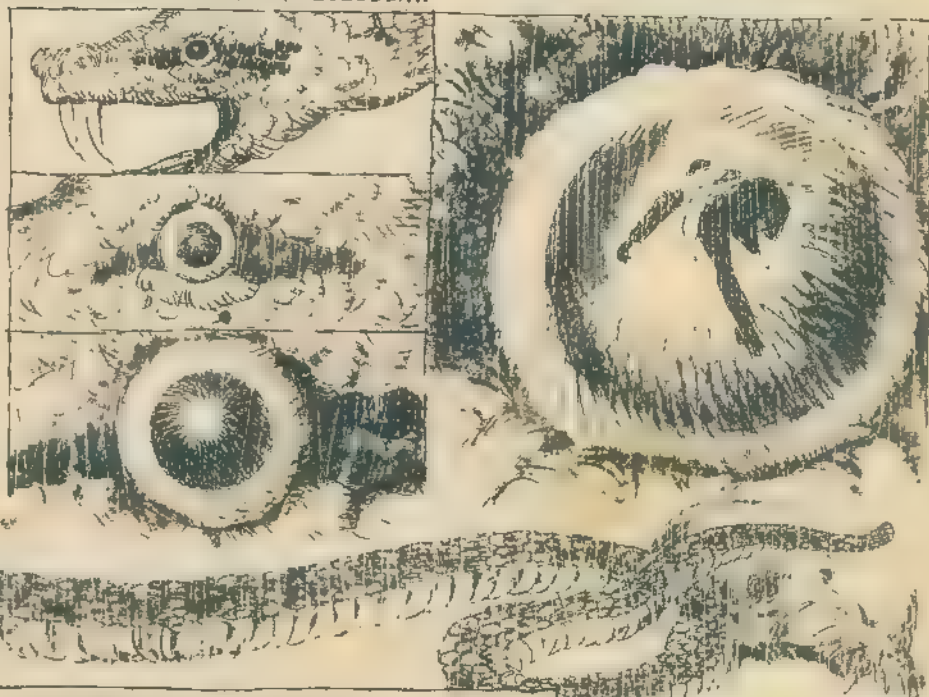
NAHEMAH EXULTS IN THE PANIC SHE CAUSES. SIBILANT HISSES SPLIT THE AIR IN SERPENTINE LAUGHTER.

SHE IS ALIVE ONCE MORE. EVEN THE  
ESSENCE OF FOULED AIR TINGLES AT  
HER NOSTRILS... AND HE KNOWS  
A FEAR BORN OF THE  
ANCIENTS!



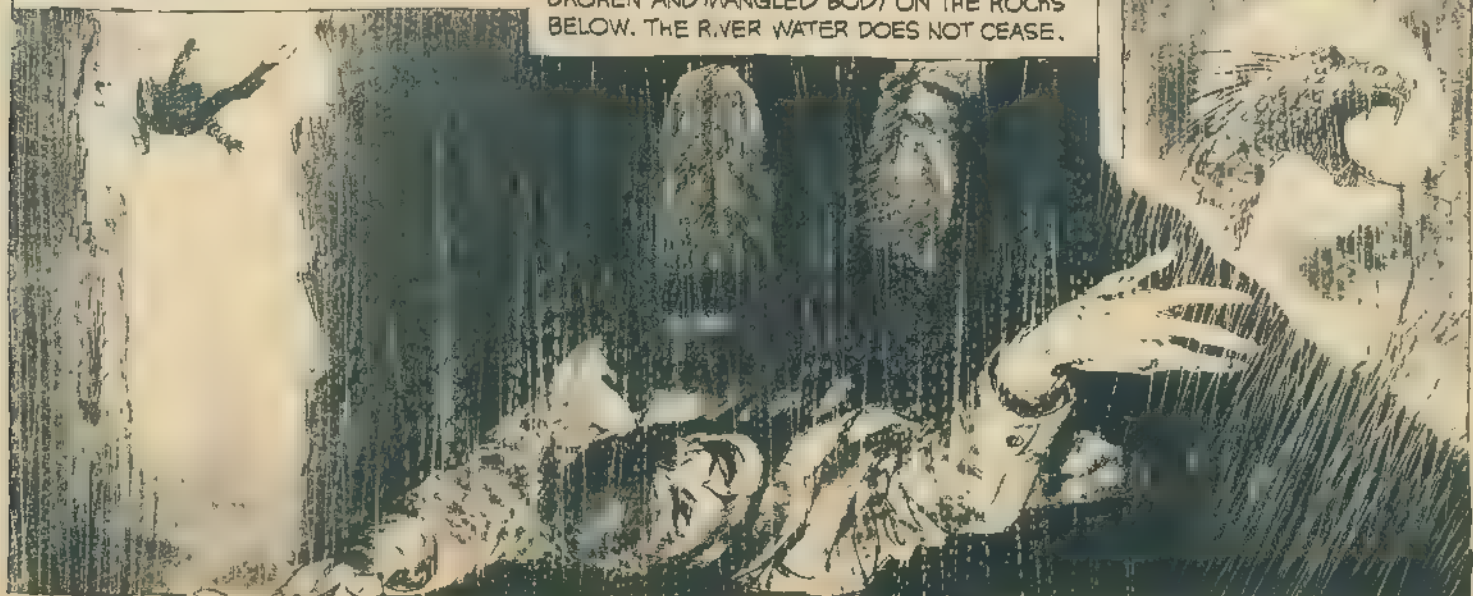
COLD, REPTILIAN EYES WATCH WITH A GLINT OF AMUSEMENT AS THE BROKEN MALE  
FIGURE HURTTLES AWAY CARELESSLY...

AND THEN SHE RELEASES HIM, BONES  
SNAPPED ALONG WITH SPIRIT.



AND FALLS OVER THE EDGE OF EARTH  
COLLIDING HARD AGAINST THE GROUND AND  
THEN FALLING OUTWARD, SPINNING, INTO  
THE RUSH OF AIR, HURTLING TOWARD HIS  
DEATH.

THE MALE HUMAN'S SCREAMS FADE QUICKLY.  
THE ONLY TESTIMONY TO THE EVENTS IS THE  
BROKEN AND MANGLED BODY ON THE ROCKS  
BELOW. THE RIVER WATER DOES NOT CEASE.





IT WAS ALL  
SO HORRIBLE...

I SHOULDN'T HAVE  
DONE IT, NAHEMAH!  
WHY DID YOU LET ME  
DO IT?

YOU ALWAYS COMPLAIN,  
HARRIET STONE! YOU BASK  
IN YOUR SELF-MADE  
REALITY OF MISERY AND  
SELF-PITY!



GIVE ME  
BACK MY BODY,  
NAHEMAH!!

SELF-PITY! NO.  
YOU'RE WRONG!  
I WAS JUSTIFIED!

BUT *I* WAS *USED*!  
I DID NOT MAKE THAT  
UP!

AGREED. IN *THIS*  
INSTANCE. BUT IT IS  
NOT THE MOMENTARY  
SELF-PITY THAT IS DESPICABLE,  
IT IS THOSE WHO MAKE A LIFE-  
STYLE OF CURSING OTHERS  
FOR THEIR FAILURES!

MANY OF YOUR  
RACE JUSTIFY THEIR  
UNSPOKEN, NEARLY  
UNALTERABLE RULE:  
THAT THEY ARE  
DETERMINED TO SEEK  
THEIR OWN BRAND  
OF HELL!

YOU WHO ARE NEVER  
CONTENT, WHO ARE CONSUMED  
BY JEALOUSY AND VIEW OTHERS  
AS BEING THE CHOSEN ONES:  
**WASTING YOUR LIVES ON  
HELLISH NIGHTMARES!!!**

I AM AFRAID THAT IS  
IMPOSSIBLE. IF YOU HAD  
BEEN UNABLE TO TOUCH  
ANYTHING FOR CENTURIES,  
YOU WOULD KNOW WHAT I  
MEAN! NOW I CAN TASTE. I CAN  
FEEL! THERE ARE OTHER MEN  
OUT THERE OF DIFFERENT  
CALIBERS THAN THIS ONE I  
JUST SLEW! I WILL KNOW  
SOME OF THEM. THEY WILL  
COME TO ME!

IF I ALLOWED YOU BACK,  
YOU WOULD CONTINUE TO  
DREAM DREAMS OF DESPAIR.  
YOU WOULD NOT ENJOY  
THESE SENSATIONS... **YOU  
WOULD CONTINUE TO  
WAIL YOUR SAD-EYE  
SYMPHONY: VERSES  
RHYMED TO CONSOLE  
ONLY YOURSELF!**

BUT BELIEVE ME  
HARRIET, I SHALL ENJOY  
EACH PERCEPTION.

I REALLY  
SHALL!!!

JUST A LITTLE LESSON  
TAKEN OUT OF THE ARCHIVES,  
FIEND READERS, SO  
REMEMBER, THE NEXT TIME  
YOU'RE OUT ON THE STREETS  
SEEKING TO USE SOMEONE,  
IT JUST MIGHT BE SOMEONE  
THAT WILL USE YOU! SWEET  
FANTASIES!!!





BUT RALPH,  
WHY DIDN'T YOU  
CHECK THE GAS  
GAUGE **BEFORE**  
WE LEFT...?

SHUDDUP, JEAN! I'VE HAD  
ENOUGH OF YOUR BELLY-  
ACHING TO LAST ME THE  
NEXT TWENTY YEARS!

THE ROAD WAS DARK, AND DESOLATE. NO CARBON-  
COPY GAS STATIONS-- WITH THEIR FAMILIAR PINBALL --  
MACHINE-LIKE FLASHING LIGHTS-- INTERRUPTED ITS  
BLEAK LENGTH...

YOU DON'T HAVE TO  
GET SO **NASTY** ABOUT  
IT-- I'M FRIGHTENED  
ENOUGH AS IT IS... OUT  
HERE IN THE MIDDLE  
OF NOWHERE... IN  
THE DARK...

LOOK, I'M  
TELLING YOU FOR  
THE **LAST TIME**--  
IF YOU DON'T SHUT UP,  
I'LL **SHUT** YOU UP!

READY FOR SOME DIRE DOLLOPS OF  
DIABOLICAL DASTARDLINESS, CONNOISSEURS?  
LET'S JOIN RALPH AND JEAN AS THEY  
INEXTRICABLY ENMESH THEMSELVES IN  
A LITTLE DRAMA CALLED...

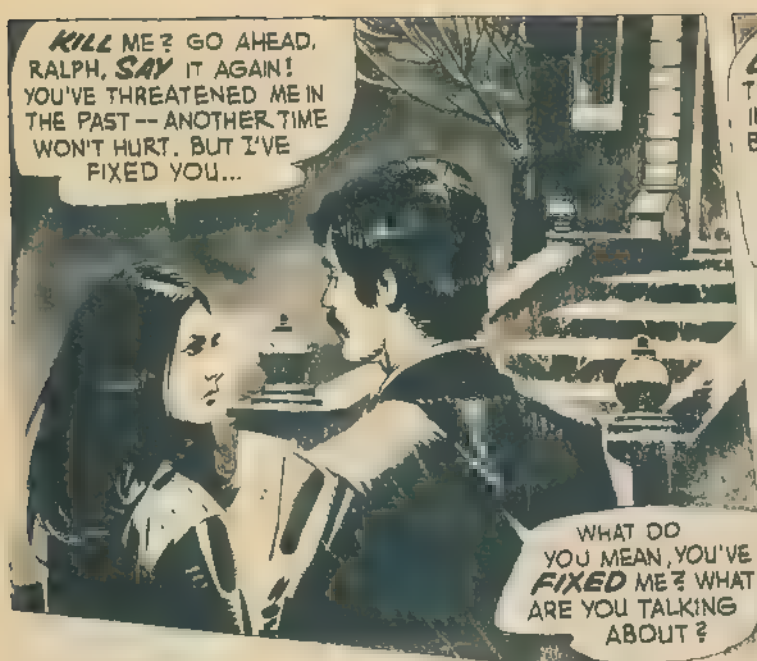
# WON'T GET FOOLED AGAIN

ISOLATED, BROODING, DECREPIT,  
THE ANCIENT MANSION STOOD  
TENUOUSLY--YET DEFIANTLY--  
ON ITS TERMITE-INFESTED  
FOUNDATIONS. ITS GABLED  
ROOF SEEMED TO SAG WITH  
THE WEIGHT OF A CENTURY--  
ITS WALLS WERE WEARY WITH  
DURESS. ITS FACADE OF  
RESPECTABILITY WAS  
TARNISHED WITH THE TRUTH  
OF TIME, AND ITS APPEARANCE  
SPOKE OF IMPENDING  
RUINATION...

RALPH, YOU'RE **NOT**  
THINKING OF STAYING  
IN **THIS** CREEPY  
PLACE...? I MEAN, I  
JUST **COULDN'T**...

YOU'RE JUST NOT  
GOING TO **QUIT**, ARE  
YOU? YOU'RE GOING TO  
KEEP RIGHT ON HARPING  
AWAY UNTIL YOUR TONGUE  
FALLS OUT! I SWEAR,  
SOMETIMES I COULD...





KILL ME? GO AHEAD, RALPH, **SAY** IT AGAIN! YOU'VE THREATENED ME IN THE PAST -- ANOTHER TIME WON'T HURT. BUT I'VE FIXED YOU...

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, YOU'VE **FIXED** ME? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

I'VE INFORMED MY **LAWYER** OF YOUR PREVIOUS THREATS ON MY LIFE. IF I DIE IN ANY **UNNATURAL** WAY, YOU'LL BE THE PRIME SUSPECT! YOU MARRIED ME FOR MY MONEY, AND THE ONLY WAY YOU'LL CONTINUE GETTING IT IS TO **STAY** MARRIED TO ME -- YOU **WON'T INHERIT** IT!

YOU'RE CRAZY, JEAN -- **SICK!** I WOULDN'T WASTE THE **EFFORT** OF MURDERING YOU!

THE WHISPERING HUSH OF THE OPENING DOOR IS IMPERCEPTIBLE AND THUS UNNOTICED -- BUT THE **VOICE**... THE VOICE COMMANDS ATTENTION...



WELCOME... TO THIS HOUSE. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE HAD ANY VISITORS. ALLOW ME TO OFFER MY MEAGER HOSPITALITY...

WHO--?!



I'M THOMAS CATES--AND THIS IS MY HOUSE. I CAN SEE YOU'VE HAD SOME TROUBLE -- MAY I EXTEND AN INVITATION TO SPEND THE NIGHT HERE?

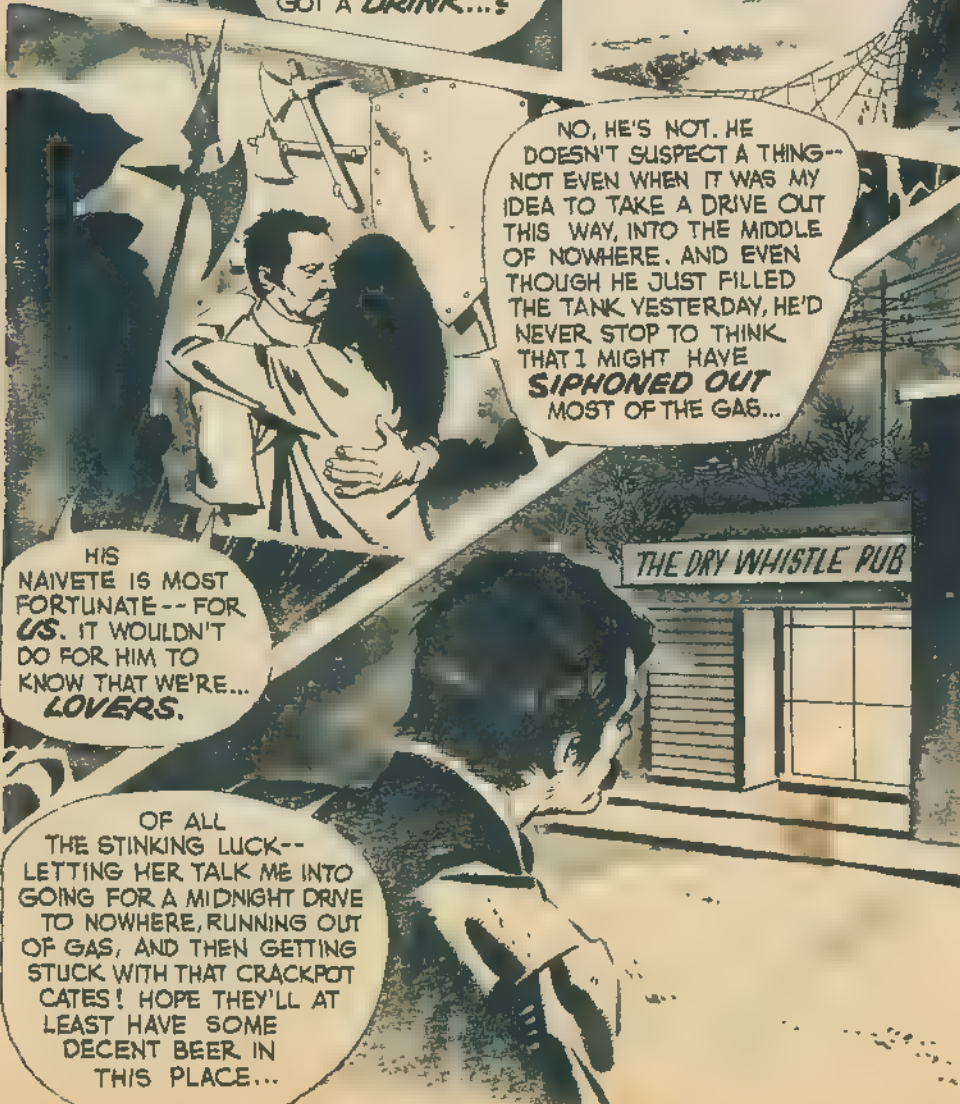
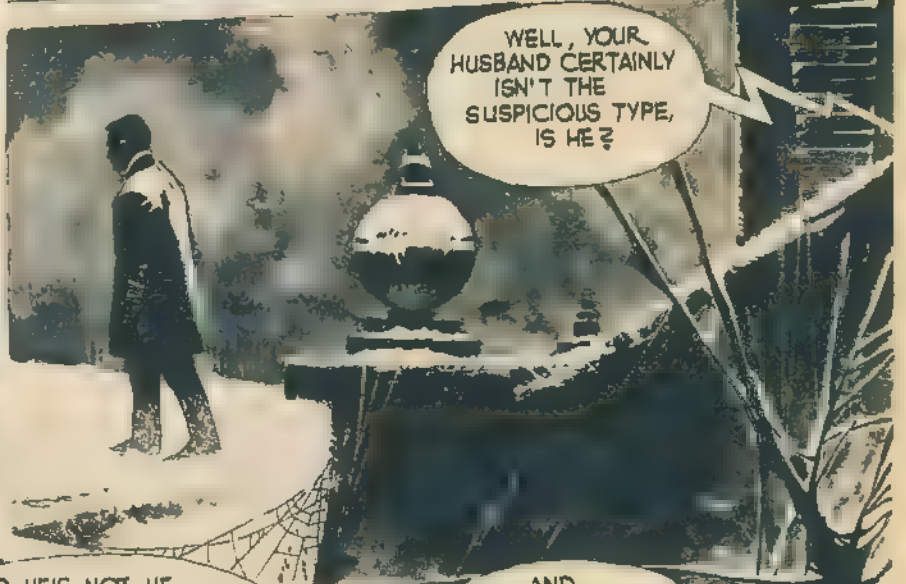
UH... THANKS. WE RAN OUT OF GAS ABOUT THREE MILES BACK. DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY GAS STATIONS AROUND.



A MOST UNFORTUNATE OCCURRENCE. BUT, LIKE THE CUSTOMS OF OLD ENGLAND, MY HOUSE IS AN OPEN SANCTUARY TO THOSE IN NEED.

THAT'S VERY... GRACIOUS OF YOU, MR. CATES. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE IT.







YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED AS WELL AS I DO! IT STARTED A **CENTURY** AGO AND IT WON'T **END** UNTIL THE GHOST'S REVENGE IS EXACTED...

'HE WAS ALWAYS UNSURE OF HIMSELF-- NEVER BELIEVED HIS WIFE WANTED ANYTHING BUT...'

MONEY! THAT'S THE ONLY REASON YOU MARRIED ME-- FOR MY **MONEY!** BUT I'M WELL AWARE OF YOUR REASONS, YOUR DESIRES-- **AND YOUR SCHEMES!**

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! YOU'RE **MAD**... I DON'T KNOW WHY I EVER **MARRIED** YOU!

'HE HAD A VOLATILE TEMPER-- AND EXERCISED IT RELIGIOUSLY. PERHAPS HE FELT INFERIOR OR INCOMPETENT FOR SOME UNKNOWN REASON...'

SO YOU **ADMIT** YOU NEVER LOVED ME! I **KNEW** IT! AND I KNOW YOU'VE GOT LOVERS HIDING IN EVERY NOOK AND CRANNY OF THIS HOUSE! I ALSO KNOW THAT YOU PLAN TO **MURDER** ME-- SO YOU AND YOUR LOVERS CAN ENJOY MY WEALTH IN **TOTAL** FREEDOM!

**NO!** NO, YOU'RE **WRONG!** YOU'RE INSANELY SUSPICIOUS-- AND THERE'S ABSOLUTELY NO **CAUSE** FOR IT!

'HIS UNFOUNDED JEALOUSY DROVE HIM TO ELABORATE PRECAUTIONS. HE HAD HIS WIFE'S ROOM GUARDED AT ALL TIMES-- BUT ONLY BY EUNUCHS. HE DESTROYED HIS WILL WHICH HAD PROVIDED FOR THE BEQUEATHMENT OF HIS ENTIRE FORTUNE TO HIS WIFE...'

YEAH-- WE **ALL** KNOW THAT, AND **MORE!** BUT IT DOESN'T PROVE THE EXISTENCE OF ANY **GHOST!**

WE'D COINCIDENCE-- THIS MAN IN THE BARTENDER'S STORY SOUNDS JUST LIKE JEAN-- AFRAID THAT ALL I MARRIED HER FOR WAS HER **MONEY**...

MAYBE IT **DOESN'T** MEAN THERE'S A GHOST. BUT DO YOU REMEMBER HOW...

'...HIS WIFE WAS DRIVEN TO THE BRINK OF INSANITY BY HIS UNFOUNDED ACCUSATIONS? HOW SHE BECAME DISTRAUGHT, **ESTRANGED**-- UNTIL FINALLY SHE TOOK ONE OF HIS AXES FROM THE DISPLAY ON THE HOUSE'S WALL...?'



'...AND HOW SHE STEALTHILY CREEPT DOWN THE DARKENED CORRIDORS, FIERCELY GRIPPING THAT AXE, TO HER SLEEPING HUSBAND'S BEDROOM...?'



'...HOW SHE INTENDED TO **BEHEAD** HIM-- NOT FOR HIS MONEY, BUT BECAUSE HE HAD DRIVEN HER **INSANE**.?'

I CAN'T **STAND** IT ANY LONGER! I CAN'T **LIVE** UNDER A **LOCK AND KEY**!



GOOD LORD! **NO!**

'...AND HOW SHE DESCENDED INTO A FRENZY OF BERSERK BLOODLUST, BUT **FAILED** TO DECAPITATE HIM-- CUTTING OFF HIS **ARM** INSTEAD...?'



'...AND LEFT HIM IN HIS BED TO SLOWLY DIE IN AGONY, THE BLOOD PUMPING IN CRIMSON GOULTS FROM THE SEVERED STUMP OF HIS **ARM**...?'



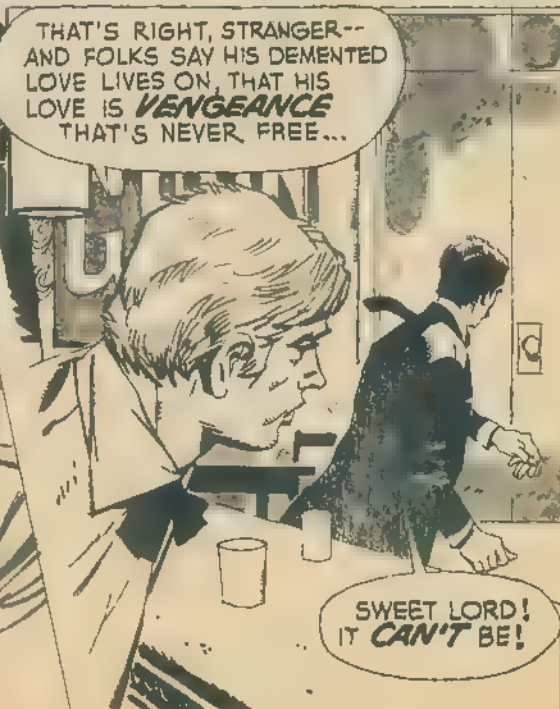
AND NOW--A CENTURY LATER--**LIGHTS** HAVE BEEN SEEN IN THE HOUSE. PEOPLE SAY THE GHOST OF THOMAS CATES HAS RETURNED TO HIS RUN-DOWN MANSION-- TO WREAK HORRIBLE VENGEANCE UPON HIS WIFE!

PEOPLE WHO SEE LIGHTS IN THE CATES HOUSE ARE SEEING THE EFFECTS OF TOO MUCH LIQUOR IN **YOUR** PUB! BESIDES, CATES' WIFE HAS BEEN DEAD FOR EIGHTY YEARS!

THAT'S RIGHT, STRANGER-- AND FOLKS SAY HIS DEMENTED LOVE LIVES ON, THAT HIS LOVE IS **VENGEANCE** THAT'S NEVER FREE...



THE MAN'S NAME WAS... **CATES**? AND HIS **ARM** WAS CUT OFF...?



SWEET LORD! IT **CAN'T** BE!





WHO'RE  
YOU CALLING-- GHOST  
HUNTERS  
INCORPORATED?

IT *CAN'T* BE TRUE--  
BUT IT *MUST* BE! THE  
*NAME*, THE *AXES*  
MOUNTED ON THE WALL,  
THE MISSING *ARM*...  
AND HE SAID THAT *JEAN*  
REMINDED HIM OF  
SOMEONE BEAUTIFUL  
HE ONCE KNEW--  
*HIS WIFE!*

NO! THE *POLICE*.



AND HE WANTS  
*VENGEANCE* ON HIS  
WIFE -- HE'LL *KILL JEAN!*  
AND THANKS TO THAT WARNING  
JEAN GAVE HER LAWYER --  
ABOUT ME THREATENING  
TO *MURDER* HER-- I'LL  
BE THE *PRIME* SUSPECT--  
THE *ONLY* SUSPECT- IF  
THE *REAL* MURDERER  
IS A *GHOST!*

JEAN! JEAN!  
ARE YOU *ALL*  
*RIGHT?* WHERE  
ARE YOU?

KRUNK!

--GER--

THUNDER!

JEAN! WE'VE GOT  
TO GET *OUT* OF HERE!  
YOU'RE IN *DANGER*,  
JEAN, DAN--





MY **HEAD**...  
FEELS LIKE MY BRAIN'S  
SLOSHING AROUND LIKE  
AN EGG YOLK...WONDER  
HOW LONG I WAS **OUT**...  
JEAN! GOT TO **FIND**  
HER...

**BLOOD**-- ON THE SHEETS!  
OH GOD--! BUT HER BODY'S  
NOT HERE-- MAYBE SHE'S  
STILL **ALIVE**...

GHOST OR NOT,  
SOMETHING HIT **ME** AND  
MADE THAT **BLOOD** IN THE  
BEDROOM! BETTER TAKE  
THIS AXE TO PROTECT  
MYSELF...

I DON'T CARE IF  
YOU **ARE** A GHOST--  
YOU **KILLED** JEAN AND  
NOW I'LL GO TO PRISON  
FOR IT! I'LL HACK YOU  
TO **PIECES**! DIE!  
DIE! DIE!

IT'S **CATES**--  
AND THERE'S A BLOODY  
AXE ON THE BED NEXT  
TO HIM! HE **DID**  
MURDER JEAN!

OH, MY **GOD**!  
WHAT HAVE I **DONE**?!  
THIS MAN WAS  
NO **GHOST**...!

HOLD  
IT RIGHT THERE,  
MISTER!





YOU'RE UNDER **ARREST!**  
YOU'LL GET THE **CHAIR**  
FOR **THIS!**

COME ALONG  
NOW-- YOU'LL BE  
ALLOWED ONE PHONE  
CALL TO YOUR **LAWYER**  
WHEN WE GET TO THE  
STATION...



**PROVIDING** I MADE  
FREQUENT VISITS TO HIM OUT  
HERE IN THIS **LOATHSOME** HOUSE.  
SOMETIMES I WONDERED IF  
IT WAS **WORTH** IT...



WELL, YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO DO IT  
AGAIN NOW THAT CATES HAS BEEN CUT UP  
INTO LITTLE PIECES! NICE THAT HE SHOULD  
BE CRAZY ENOUGH TO MAKE OUT HIS WILL  
WITH **YOU** AS **BENEFICIARY**...



**FINALLY!** THOUGHT  
I'D SUFFOCATE IN THIS  
BLOODY SUIT-OF-ARMOR!  
BUT IT WAS **WORTH** IT--  
THE PLAN WENT LIKE  
CLOCKWORK! YOUR CALL  
TO THE POLICE WAS  
TIMED **PERFECTLY**.

YEAH, GOOD THING YOUR  
HUSBAND'S SUCH A BOOZER--  
IT WAS A GAMBLE HOPING HE'D  
COME TO THE PUB. HE FELL FOR  
THE **GHOST** STORY LIKE A TON  
OF BRICKS! 'COURSE, HOW WAS  
HE TO KNOW YOU NEVER REALLY  
HAD ANY MONEY--THAT A SCREWY  
ECCENTRIC LIKE CATES KEPT  
YOU SUPPLIED WITH ALL THE  
DOUGH YOU **WANTED?**

RIGHT. AND SINCE RALPH  
WAS THOUGHTFUL ENOUGH TO  
**KILL** CATES, I CAN COLLECT THE  
INHERITANCE-- AND RALPH'LL BE PUT  
AWAY FOREVER. LIKE **THREE** BIRDS  
WITH ONE AXE-- GETTING RID OF BOTH  
CATES **AND** RALPH, AND COLLECTING  
A NICE FORTUNE ON THE SIDE! LUCKY  
CATES WAS SUCH A SOUND SLEEPER--  
IT WASN'T EASY PLANTING THAT  
BLOODY AXE ON THE BED  
NEXT TO HIM...



WHICH REMINDS ME--  
WE'D BETTER GET RID  
OF IT BEFORE THE  
POLICE RETURN TO MAKE  
THEIR INVESTIGATIONS.  
YOUR FINGER-PRINTS  
ARE ALL OVER IT.



I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT ALL WORKED-- IT WAS SUCH A **COMPLICATED** UP. YOU SHOULD BE A DETECTIVE STORY WRITER INSTEAD OF A BARTENDER --THAT GHOST LEG WAS PERFECT.

WELL, IT'S A CINCH I WON'T BE TENDING BAR ANYMORE-- NOT AFTER YOU COLLECT

ESPECIALLY AFTER CATES CAME TO THIS HOUSE. HE'S SUPPOSED TO LOOK **EXACTLY** LIKE THE ORIGINAL CATES--AND THE FACT THAT THE CATES LINE WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE DIED WITH HIM ADDED MORE FIRE TO THE LEGEND, OF COURSE. THERE WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE **ANY** SURVIVING RELATIVES.

WELL, THERE AREN'T ANY **NOW**--RALPH SAW TO **THAT!**

WHAT--?! WHERE'S THE BODY--THE AXE?! THERE'S NO BLOOD ON THE SHEETS--!

IT- T'S IMPOSSIBLE! I HEARD RALPH HACKING CATES TO PIECES! I HEARD CATES SCREAM! THE POLICE SAID HE'D BEEN MUTILATED! NO ONE'S BEEN HERE TO TAKE THE BODY AWAY... JOHN, I'M SCARED... I'M VERY SCARED...

NO! YOU'RE DEAD--  
YOU'RE DEAD! RALPH  
KILLED YOU-AAAAAAiiiiiiiEEEEEE!

JUSTICE HAS TAKEN MY HUSBAND'S CRIME  
AS THE PRICE FOR HIS WIFE'S DEATH

WELL, THERE  
AREN'T ANY **NOW--**  
RALPH SAW TO  
**THAT!**

WELL, IT'S A CINCH I WON'T BE TENDING BAR ANYMORE-- NOT AFTER YOU COLLECT CATES' INHERITANCE ANYWAY --BUT I *DIDN'T* MAKE UP THE GHOST LEGEND. PEOPLE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT IT FOR YEARS...

GOOD LORD--!

AND WELL  
YOU *SHOULD* BE,  
MY DEAR SWEET WIFE!  
I *KNEW* YOU HAD LOVERS  
HIDDEN AWAY IN *OUR*  
HOUSE -- AND NOW I'VE  
CAUGHT YOU, *TOGETHER*.  
AND TOGETHER YOU SHALL  
*DIE!* MY LOVE IS VENGEANCE  
NOW AND IT WILL SOON BE  
FREE -- WITH THE  
REVENGE FOR YOUR  
INFIDELITIES...

DIE,  
UNFAITHFUL WIFE,  
DIE FOR YOURS SINS--  
ALONG WITH YOUR  
LOVER!

NO! IT-IT  
CAN'T *BE!* YOU'RE  
*DEAD!* RALPH CHOPPED  
YOU UP! I'M *NOT* YOUR  
WIFE! YOU'RE *CRAZY--*  
YOU CAN'T BE THE  
ORIGINAL CATES! I  
WON'T BELIEVE IT!  
THERE'S NO SUCH  
THING AS GHOSTS--!

NO! YOU'RE DEAD--  
YOU'RE *DEAD!* RALPH  
*KILLED* YOU-AAAAAiiiiiiEEEEE!

GOOD LORD--!

IF YOU AXE ME, DISEMBODIED JUSTICE HAS PREVAILED HERE -- BY AVENGING JEAN'S CRIME AGAINST RALPH AT THE SAME TIME AS THE DISEMBODIED CATES AVENGED HIS WIFE'S CRIME AGAINST HIM!



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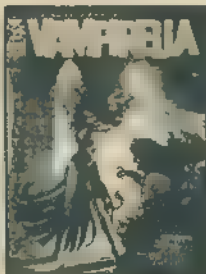
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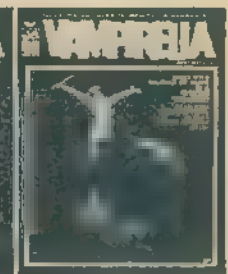
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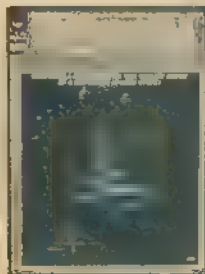
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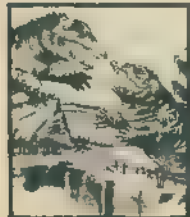
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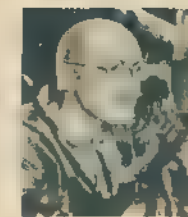
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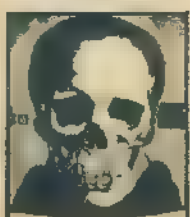
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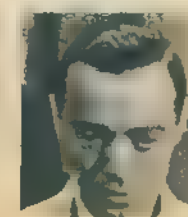
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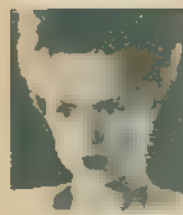
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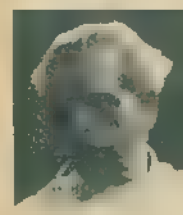
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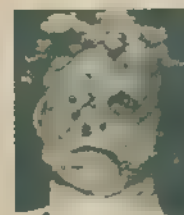
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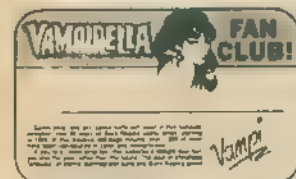
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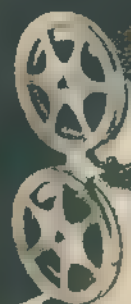
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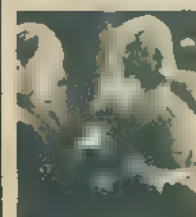
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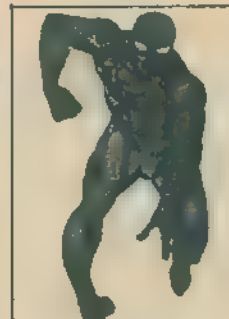
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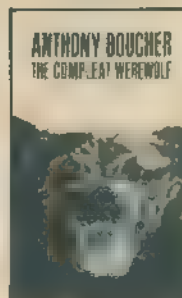
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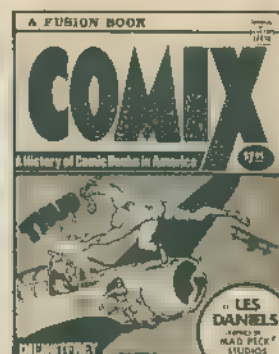
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# VAMPI'S FLAMES

## WRITER'S PROFILE: KEVIN PAGAN



Portrait of writer Kevin Pagan, whose work "Nymphs" appears on this issue's inside front cover. Garcia art.

The above sketch of me was done by my father, Frank Pagan, who is a partner and Creative Director for a major advertising agency. He originally started as a comic illustrator in the forties. Since my father is a designer and my mother a former professional singer, both periodically wonder where my writing streak came from.

I am a basically decent-looking 22 year-old who doesn't smoke, drinks moderately, has a good home life, and has a hell of a lot of trouble with women. Who

doesn't? A Moon Child with a reasonable (sometimes stubborn) disposition. I treasure my bachelorhood, freedom of opinion (in what other country are you so damn free?) and sense of humor. Women's Lib causes me no end of amusement. Not particularly a sports fan. I occasionally break down and watch the Mets. I like Italian food, English horror movies, and toasted bagels.

Since greedily absorbing volumes of Ray Bradbury, A.E. Van Vogt and Edmond Hamilton as a child, I've evolved into a fierce reader of everything from best-sellers to sci-fi paperbacks. I relax my mind by either listening to the Neil Diamond sound or scripting horror/fantasy sagas, the latter of which I've been scribbling down for longer than I can remember.

My first published work was in those amateur privately printed ditto-memo things called fanzines available only through the mail. First Pro work was way back in Creepy #31 ably illustrated by William Barry. I plan to be a bit more frequent after this in future issues of the Warren magazines. Of course, Editors always have the last word.

Scenes from stories written by Kevin Pagan. Below, artist William Barry's interpretation of Pagan's first professional comic work, "Laughing Liquid" from Creepy #31. At right, the chiller called "Sleep" from Creepy #44, illustrated by Mike Ploog, a terror epic.



Cerberus, the demon, leads the village children in homage to the devil in the haunting epic, "On the Ninth Day of Satan," illustrated by Felix Mas and written by Kevin Pagan from Creepy #46. Also from Pagan is the terrifying story "Warped!" which appears in the current Eerie, #41. Art by Grandenetti, the story tells of immortality.

## EYE OF THE SKULL

In the darkened privacy of his room, Nicholas unwrapped the package, purchased an hour or so before at a Curiosity Shop. It was a time-bleached human skull with a sphere of pure gleaming crystal set in the right eye socket. As he stared at the skull turning it in his hands, watching as the light shot through the crystal, he wondered why the shop owner had been so reticent to sell the relic, why he had told all those tales of the skull's origin from the Carpathian mountains of Transylvania. The shop owner, old and balding, the very picture of a miser, warned Nicholas that the skull's previous owner had been a sorcerer who used the skull to guard his sacred grimoire. But Nicholas was determined. He was not going to be put off by a grimy shopkeeper, particularly when he was certain the legends were all a ruse to raise the price of the skull. "Whatever you do," the shopkeeper had said, leading Nicholas out the front door, "do not look into the crystal eye."

What could possibly have been so important about the eye, Nicholas wondered, amused by the foolish tries of the old shopkeeper in trying to raise the ante for the skull.

The thing was harmless enough and might well make an attractive conversation piece, if placed on the mantle where everyone could see it, see the gleaming eye as the light poured through. He looked into the clear depths of the stone. It seemed like a bottomless void drawing him deeper until his eye was against the smooth stone itself. Then, the transparency of the stone altered and it took on a rose like shade that darkened to scarlet and finally blood red in color.

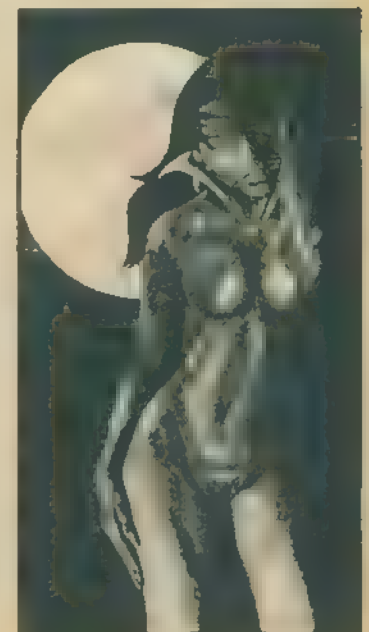
He felt teeth bite into his throat, severing the jugular vein. Nicholas was powerless to move. The room seemed to swim by its own will, as if alive. As life ebbed away, he could only stare into the ever-reddening stone set in the eye-socket of the skull. He tried with all of his might to fight the powers of the skull but there was nothing to be done, no way out. The room darkened as if through the might of the living presence within the skull, the skull that had been host to a vampire before the unknown sorcerer using stake, axe and spells bound the blood-drinking spirit within the crystal.

By Thomas Pallanta

## VAMPIRE?

Everything about him said vampire! His pallor was a ghastly chalk-white and his lips and tongue looked as if they had been painted red. When he shook hands with me, I felt hair on the palm of his hand. When he smiled, I noticed a pair of gleaming white fangs, sharp and very deadly. His long, thin hands with their long sharp finger nails looked strangely like claws. He spoke with the classic Transylvanian accent. The sight of him sent chills up and down my spine. Then, when he began to lick his chops as if in anticipation of a meal, I hurried away, as best I could running with everything that was in me, fear driving me on with the speed of a wolf. In the end, I suppose the moon was full that night. It is the only explanation.

By Lloyd M. Auerbach



Haunting view of our girl from Drakulon was rendered by West Haven, Conn. reader FRANK VILLANO, JR.



# HIDDEN DANGER

The whine of the airship was already in his ears as he emerged from the apartment house living right next door to the jetport. The noise was so common that he would not have noticed it at all, had he not hated the magno-jets so much.

"Blasted suicide ships," he muttered as he gazed up at the egg-shaped craft coming around in a tight loop before its rapid descent to the awaiting runway. As it whizzed past, he cursed the company job that had lured him to this city, forced him to live aside the jetport he loathed. Hardly had he time to complete his thought, when a terse shriek rudely announced the coming of the next magno-jet. As he watched it, he wondered whether anyone realized the danger that this time the craft might not make it.

As always, the craft executed its landing perfectly.

"Why doesn't anybody see the danger?" he asked himself. Feeling defeated, the man sullenly turned his head forward.

Suddenly, a panicky scream pierced the curtain of noise about him and even as he twirled to look, he shivered. A new magno-jet was pitching headlong into a cluster of buildings alongside the jetport and before his horrified eyes, a great ball of fire told of the incendiary devastation which had overtaken his home and the pain in his chest told him that the remote-controlled energy-source for his heart pacemaker had not survived the flaming holocaust.

By Eric W. Flesch

(Fan writer Flesch also has a letter on The Letters page.)

## THE ASSASSIN

He lay in a bush tunnel atop a small knoll, overlooking the kill-area. Still, he did not move and had not for hours. Drifting in the night before, he had positioned himself before daylight. Now, at sunset, his target was due. Making a hit in twilight would be tricky, but the following nightfall would simplify his escape. Just as his camouflaged clothing defied detection in his present location, so would darkness cover his fade-out later. He raised himself cautiously to his elbows and brought the small caliber rifle to his shoulder. Where was the target? If he was late tonight, the darkness would be on his side. Steady. The first job was always the toughest, get through this initiation and he'd be on his way. Hired killers were rarely caught and the big money went to the cool kings who always succeeded. He squinted through the scope. Plenty of light left. He checked the silencer-cylinder on the bore, tight and straight. Relax. Stay loose. If not tonight, the next or even the one after that. In hunting, you stalked, waiting.

His kill-area was the back

lot of a secluded, woods-surrounded home. His intended victim always circled the house and entered from the back. But this time instead of sanctuary, death awaited. Movement from the corner of the house caught the killer's eye and he readied his aim. His target moved predictably. The first shot stopped him dead. Perfect! Dead before he hit the ground. Just to be sure, the assassin emptied the remainder of his clip into the victim's spine.

He felt a slight pang of conscience as he rode through the cool night air. It was too bad because it wasn't a bad looking dog. If it hadn't spent its time roaming the nearby neighborhoods, barking in the early dawn hours, the fed-up inhabitants would never have taken up a collection for him to rid them of the nuisance. And he wouldn't have had a chance to begin the realization of a life long dream. He was a professional killer now. He caressed the weapon hidden beneath his jacket and rode on, smiling at the cold and wintry night.

By Bill Cantey



"Sorry for the kidding cartoon 'VAMPI,' writes Manhattan Beach, Calif. fan artist SEAWARD TUTHILL. 'You're great!'"



Blonde-tressed female, dressed in VAMPIRELLA-type costuming and Levi's brand-trousers, wards off alien laser beams while carrying her true love to safety in this advertising takeoff on the comic book covers of yesteryear currently being promoted by the firm of Levi Strauss, trouser maker. Cartoonish cover ad above appeared in the trade publication, Women's Wear Daily in January.

Levi Strauss & Co. San Francisco

## DRINK, MY LOVE

I remember as if it were yesterday. You remember darling, don't you? We were really having a great time. Then you poured the wine in my glass. Softly, you whispered into my ear. "Drink, my love." It was drugged, wasn't it, Wendy?

When I awoke, sometime later I was lying on the floor. I watched you as you threw my books on witchcraft and demonology into the fireplace. I tried to protest but it was all in vain. You laughed at me. "You believed in this stupid trash, didn't you?" I can still hear your taunts, how I was nothing better than a superstitious idiot. Then you picked up the poker from the fireplace and drove it through my chest. I blacked out in a sea of pain.

What happened after that, I really don't know. You must have bribed some doctor to make out the death certifi-

cate. Then you made the most fatal mistake. You removed the poker from my chest. The next time I opened my eyes, I was in a coffin. Now I am glad that you had the burial vault built. Otherwise, I might have been buried too deep. My hand pushed easily against the coffin lid. How easily. The sun had set and the air was most refreshing. My darling, I am home. See that you haven't wasted time. A new boyfriend, Charles. You heard a noise and called for him but when you came, you saw that he was dead. A poker through his chest.

You were frightened then. You see that trash you burned was what enabled me to return, return as I am now, a huge bat. Yes, my dear, I am a vampire. Remember when you told me to drink? Well, my thirst is being quenched.

By George Siessel

### DON'T BE LEFT OUT IN THE COLD!

Why let all that great artwork, all those fantastic stories sit in a desk drawer? You might as well throw them out in the cold for all the good they're doing you! Better yet, send them to VAMPIRELLA! Address all fan art & stories to:

VAMPI'S FLAMES  
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# *The* "DORIAN GRAY SYNDROME"

BARBARA VASH WAS A FREELANCE WRITER WHO DEALT IN SUBJECTS OF THE OCCULT AND SUPERNATURAL. ONLY A SURE SELLING STORY COULD LURE HER INTO THE LOWER HAUNTS... PLACES FREQUENTED BY SUCH UNDESIRABLE CHARACTERS AS GORDON HATFIELD...

THERE HE IS, SITTING AT THAT TABLE. GORDON HATFIELD! FROM THE LOOKS OF HIM YOU'D NEVER BELIEVE THE INCREDIBLE STORIES GOING AROUND.. THAT HE'S ALMOST A HUNDRED YEARS OLD!

WELL, I'M NOT GETTING ANY INFO BY STANDING AROUND!

EXCUSE ME MR. HATFIELD. MY NAME IS BARBARA VASH... AND I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU FOR A FEW MINUTES, IF IT'S OKAY?

YOU'RE A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN MISS VASH. AND UNDER ORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES I'D BE GLAD TO INVITE YOU TO MY TABLE... HOWEVER NOT TONIGHT.

YOU SEE... I'M IN MOURNING. THE GIRL I LOVED WAS RECENTLY DISCOVERED DEAD... BY HER OWN HAND.

NOW IF YOU'LL LEAVE ME WITH MY THOUGHTS..





SHE FELT UNEASY ABOUT HATFIELD'S COLDNESS, EVEN THE NEXT MORNING WHEN SHE ATTENDED THE DEAD GIRL'S FUNERAL.



THAT'S STRANGE HATFIELD'S NOWHERE ABOUT. IF HE REALLY LOVED HER HE WOULD HAVE ATTENDED HER FUNERAL.

SHE HAD COME FOR A STORY AFTER ALL SHE WAS A FREELANCE WRITER SO SHE LISTENED...

I TELL YOU SHE'S LIKE ALL THE OTHERS! SHE MIGHT'VE TAKEN HER OWN LIFE... BUT IT WAS 'CAUSE OF HIM! GORDON HATFIELD!

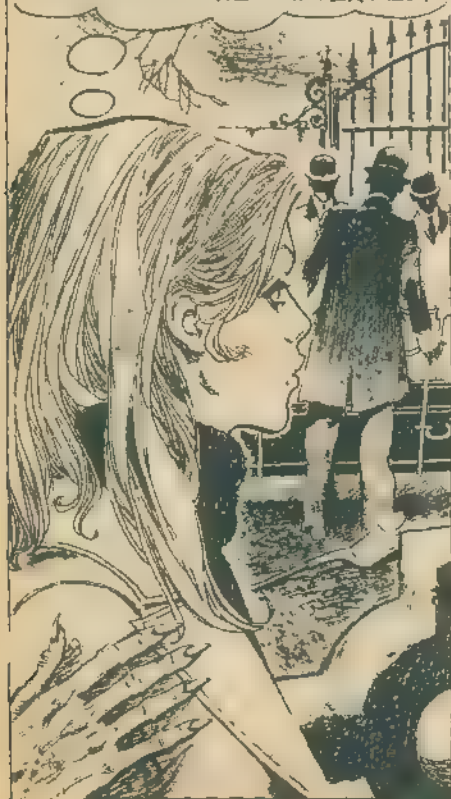


YOU'RE RIGHT! THERE'S SOMETHING WEIRD ABOUT HATFIELD! HE'S STRANGE!

WHEN I WAS A YOUNGSTER THAT HATFIELD LOOKED THE SAME AGE AS HE DOES NOW! I'VE HEARD RUMORS THAT HE HAS A PAINTING... IT'S HIS PORTRAIT! THEY SAY IT AGES FOR HIM SO HE CAN STAY ETERNALLY YOUNG. IT'S UGLY AND RIDDLED WITH SIN! I EVEN HEARD HE SOLD HIS SOUL TO THE DEVIL FOR IT!



AGAIN...THE SAME STORIES ABOUT HATFIELD, JUST LIKE OSCAR WILDE'S STORY "THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY" I'VE ENCOUNTERED MANY INEXPLICABLE THINGS IN RESEARCHING ARTICLES. MAYBE THIS PAINTING THING ISN'T SO FAR FETCHED AFTER ALL.



HUH!? OH, YOU STARTLED ME!



I'M SORRY FOR THAT, MY DEAR! BUT YOU SEE, I KNOW THAT YOU'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIND OUT ABOUT GORDON HATFIELD! IF YOU PROMISE TO DO AS I ASK... THEN I'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW!

WHAT HAVE I GOT TO LOSE?

ALL RIGHT! I'LL DO WHATEVER YOU ASK, PROVIDED YOU GIVE ME THE STORY I'M AFTER!



ALL RIGHT! THEN LISTEN...FOR I'VE SURVIVED THIS LONG... ONLY TO TELL MY STORY TO THE RIGHT PERSON! I MUST TALK FAST!





**HARRRHARR!** MR. HATFIELD, HAVE I GOT A GOOD ONE FER YA'!

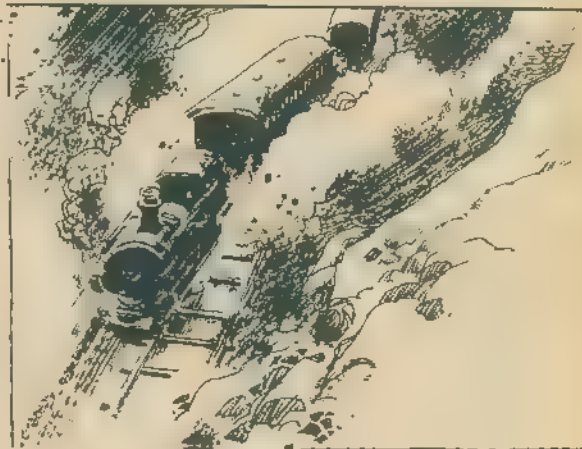
AN' ME, I GOTCHA' THAT STUFF YE BEEN WANTIN'!

"GORDON HATFIELD HAS ALWAYS BEEN PROUD OF HIS HANDSOME FEATURES. ALL THAT HAS EVER CONCERNED HIM IS EARTHLY PLEASURE. HE EXISTS ONLY TO SATISFY HIS VARIOUS LUSTS, FREQUENTING THE WORST PLACES IN TOWN AND ASSOCIATING WITH SCOUNDRELS OF EVERY TYPE"



YOU FILTH WILL BE WELL PAID... AS USUAL...

"THEY SAY THAT GORDON HATFIELD OFFERED HIS SOUL TO SATAN IN RETURN FOR PERPETUAL YOUTH. APPARENTLY THE PRINCE OF DARKNESS ANSWERED HIS PRAYER. FOR HE WAS THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF A TERRIBLE RAILROAD ACCIDENT..."



"THERE IS A PAINTING OF HATFIELD HANGING IN AN UPSTAIRS ROOM OF HIS MANSION. GORDON HAS ALWAYS BEEN PROUD OF THAT PAINTING. IT IS LIKE HIM IN EVERY WAY."

"AND SO IT ALL BEGAN! ALL THOSE WHO EVER LOVED HIM... OR HAD ANY DEALINGS WITH HIM... LEARNED TRAGEDY!"

"THERE WAS NO ESTIMATING HIS DEBAUCHERY AND CRIME. ALTHOUGH THE LAW WAS UNABLE TO PROVE ANYTHING AGAINST HIM, THE PAINTING REFLECTED THE TRUE EVIL OF HATFIELD. YEARS LATER, HE STILL APPEARED TO BE A YOUNG AND INNOCENT MAN"



IF ONLY THE PAINTING WOULD AGE INSTEAD OF ME! I COULD RETAIN MY YOUTH FOREVER! MY SOUL WOULD BE A CHEAP ENOUGH PRICE TO PAY!



I TOLD YOU THAT YOU NO LONGER AMUSE ME, MY DEAR. IF YOU PREFER TO KILL YOURSELF, THEN GO AHEAD, I DON'T CARE.

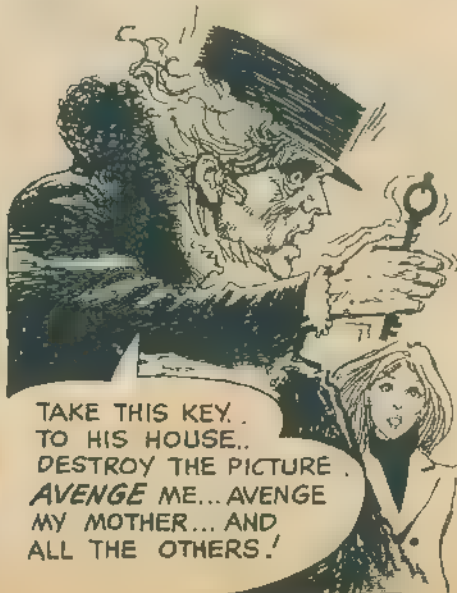


THAT STORY IS UTTERLY INCREDIBLE! BUT... ASSUMING THAT IT'S TRUE, HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT HATFIELD?

I'VE KNOWN HIM FOR A LONG TIME. IT WAS NEVER MADE PUBLIC, I'M... HIS DAUGHTER!



MY MOTHER WAS ONE OF THOSE WHO DIED BECAUSE OF HIM! AND NOW... YOUR PROMISE...



TAKE THIS KEY. TO HIS HOUSE. DESTROY THE PICTURE. AVENGE ME... AVENGE MY MOTHER... AND ALL THE OTHERS!



DEAD! THE STRAIN WAS TOO MUCH FOR HER! AND NOW I ALONE HOLD THE KEY...



BARBARA KNEW SHE WAS COMMITTING AN ILLEGAL ACT. STILL, THE THOUGHT THAT A REAL LIFE "DORIAN GRAY" EXISTED, DROVE HER ON.

THOSE STAIRS...THE OLD WOMAN SAID THE PAINTING WAS KEPT UPSTAIRS. WELL, HERE GOES!

SHE MOVED SILENTLY THERE WERE NO SERVANTS AND HATFIELD WAS NOWHERE ABOUT.

THIS MUST BE THE ROOM! I THOUGHT I KNEW ALL ABOUT THE OCCULT...BUT IF THIS IS REALLY TRUE...

HER HEART WAS READY TO BURST. SHE ENTERED THE FORBIDDING ROOM, RECALLING THE DREAD PROMISE SHE MADE TO THE OLD WOMAN...

A PAINTING! I'LL TAKE AWAY THE CLOTH... MAYBE, THIS IS THE PAINTING... OH, GOD!

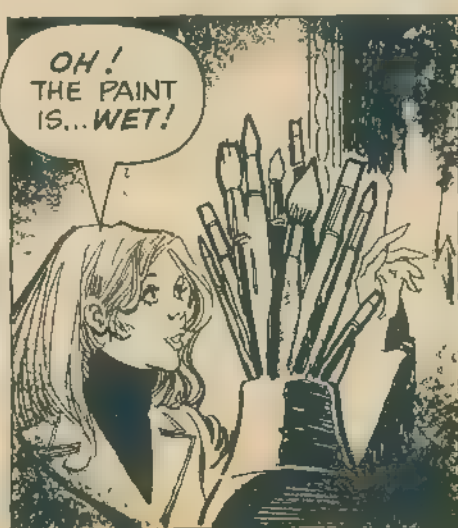


THERE... NO! GOOD GOD! IT'S... IT'S...

...FRESH PAINTS. AND WET BRUSHES! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHY WOULD A SUPERNATURAL AGENCY LIKE THE DEVIL NEED PAINTS AND BRUSHES TO DISTORT THE PICTURE?



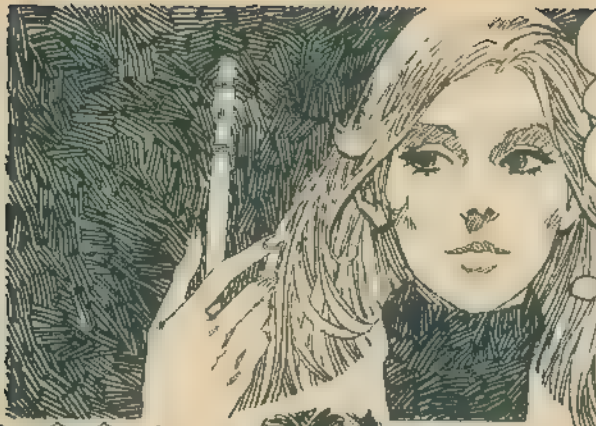
THE MOST GHASTLY THING I'VE EVER SEEN! IT'S HORRIBLE!



OH! THE PAINT IS... WET!







OF COURSE! HATFIELD HIMSELF HAS BEEN AGING THE PICTURE! THERE'S NO SOUL-SELLING IN THIS CASE! BUT *WHY* DID HE DO IT? AND *HOW* HAS HE MANAGED TO KEEP SO YOUTHFUL?

SO YOU'VE DISCOVERED MY LITTLE SECRET, EH... MISS VASH?

**YOU!**

YES, MISS VASH! YOUR CHEAP LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF THE OCCULT MUST TELL YOU THAT THIS ISN'T PAINT SMEARED ON MY MOUTH!

IT'S BLOOD! HUMAN BLOOD! YOU SEE... FOR ALMOST A CENTURY I'VE BEEN AGING THAT PICTURE WITH MY OWN ARTISTIC HAND! AGING IT SO THAT PEOPLE WOULD SUSPECT I'D SOLD MY SOUL! AND SO THEY WOULDN'T SUSPECT HOW I KEPT MY YOUTH...



... BY DRINKING BLOOD!

YOU'RE A VAMPIRE! YOU... *DIED* IN THAT TRAIN WRECK LIKE ALL THE OTHERS! AND CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD ...*UNDEAD* ETERNALLY!

GO AHEAD! IT'S JUST A PAINTING! THERE IS NO BOND THERE LIKE IN YOUR "DORIAN GRAY" STORY!

THAT IS WHY I DIDN'T ATTEND MY "LOVE'S" FUNERAL, IF EVEN JUST FOR APPEARANCES' SAKE. AFTER DRINKING HER BLOOD, I KILLED HER... LIKE ALL THE OTHERS. AND

NOW YOU'VE DISCOVERED THE TRUTH...

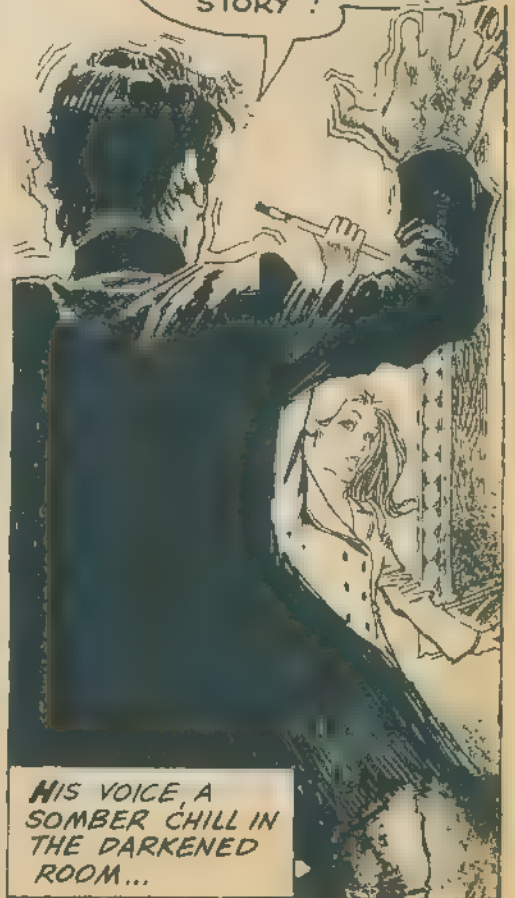
MY DEAR, I'D HAVE YOU BEFORE YOU COULD HIT YOUR TARGET!



STAY BACK... OR I'LL SHOVE THIS INTO YOUR HEART!



MAYBE... BUT I CAN STAB THE PAINTING!



*HIS VOICE, A SOMBER CHILL IN THE DARKENED ROOM...*





WE SHALL SEE!

IT WAS A DESPERATE ACT, YET BARBARA VASH WAS AN OCCULT AUTHORITY. PERHAPS SHE KNEW SOMETHING THAT HATFIELD DID NOT.

ARGHHHH!



WHA...? MY HEART! IT FEELS LIKE IT'S BEEN... IMPALED! CAN'T STAND THE... PAIN... UGHHHH....!



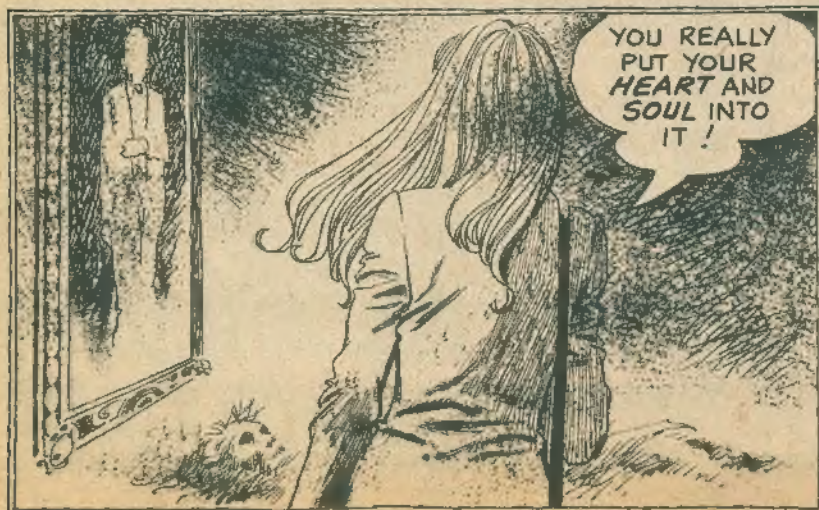
NO, YOU NEVER MADE A PACT WITH SATAN! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO! YOUR OWN ENTHUSIASM FINALLY DESTROYED YOU!



I KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT VODOO! DOLLS CONTAINING PIECES OF FLESH OR HAIR FROM THEIR HUMAN COUNTERPARTS CAN CAUSE PAIN, EVEN DEATH TO THEIR VICTIMS... IF STABBED WITH PINS OR OTHERWISE DESTROYED!



PHYSICALLY THERE WAS NOTHING OF YOU IN THAT PAINTING, GORDON HATFIELD! PIECES OF FLESH AND HAIR WEREN'T NECESSARY! YOU PAINTED YOUR MASTERPIECE TOO WELL!



YOU REALLY PUT YOUR HEART AND SOUL INTO IT!

WELL, IT WAS CURTAINS FOR OLD DORIAN, ALL RIGHT! AND HE WAS SUCH A PICTURE OF HEALTH! WELL, IF YOU FIND THIS TALE TOO COLORFUL TO PALETTE, BRUSH OFF!







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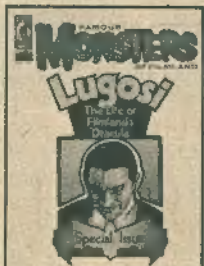
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# If you have a son 10 years old, you'd better start worrying.

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It's perfectly possible because this is a war that's been going on for the past 30 years. Yes, the past 30 years. That's how long there's been fighting and killing in Vietnam. So it isn't so absurd to think this war can go on for another 8 years, is it?

It's perfectly possible, because in spite of all the speeches and all the promises, the President has yet to set a definite date for withdrawal. Yes, that's true. The President hasn't named a day nor a month nor even a year as a time for getting out.

In fact, the President talks about leaving "residual" forces and "maintenance" troops in or around Vietnam. (If you remember, what got us into this mess was the sending of "advisory personnel" to Vietnam.)

Now do you see why it's perfectly possible that your son will fight in this absurd war? A war where mass murders of women and children are called "no big deal." A war that has already killed over 50,000 American boys who were 10 years old themselves not so long ago.

One of the most effective things you can do for your son is write your Congressmen today. They *must* know they have your support to act in Congress against this absurd war.

Write them now. And maybe 10 years from now your son will be glad you did.

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